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A MANUAL
OF
CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE,

CONTAINING, AS

A N A N T I D O T E

TO CURRENT MATERIALISTIC TENDENCIES, PARTICULARLY AS
FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF

ERNEST RENAN,

AN OUTLINE OF THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE BIBLE, IN
PROVIDENCE, IN HISTORY, IN THE UNIVERSE, AND IN THE
LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST:

BY

JOHN R. BEARD, D.D.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”—John xv., 6.

“Overcome evil with good.”—Rom. xii., 21.

“God’s foundation standeth firm.”—2 Tim. ii., 19.

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P R E F A C E.

THE tide of a religious revolution is at this hour sweeping over society. Like all great providential movements, the present one will, at least as a final result, produce far more good than evil. If excesses are occasioned, they will be counterbalanced by responding advantages, provided always due care be taken to winnow the chaff from the wheat. Truth owes its might not only to its own intrinsic qualities, but also to the faithfulness with which they are set forth and recommended. Defenders must not be lacking when assailants are busy. Indeed, it is only from the activity of the opposing forces that we can expect that resultant which is often better than either positive dogmatism or unsparing polemics. If, in the actual crisis, the religion of Jesus emerges in a form nearer to its own essential simplicity, loveliness, and power, the issue will be satisfactory to all its genuine friends.

The destructive current to which I have referred, having in part a philosophical, in part a theological hue, and springing from one source certain social tendencies, has for years been bearing down old modes of thought, and that to such an extent as now to threaten to overthrow everything but what is in accord with itself.

One of the most recent representatives in England of this crusade against positive and revealed religion is ERNEST RENAN, whose numerous and effective writings are extensively read in cultivated circles throughout the civilised world, and whose *Vie de Jésus* ("Life of Jesus") has been extensively circulated, especially by extracts and translations, among such as speak the English tongue. The qualified acceptance which these facts indicate is owing in part to the charms of the able and learned author's style, but chiefly to his constant use of religious phraseology, by which the unwary have been misled so as to regard as a reformer one who, in truth, is a revolutionist. Yet, it must be pronounced strange that any who bear the name of Christ should fail to discover the true character of a writer who has thrown many aspersions on Him who is honoured for his spiritual wisdom and pure morality, even by those who are not members of his Church. The levelling tendency of these negative forces has made itself felt, not least in quarters where true allegiance to religious liberty leaves the door open to opinions of all kinds. Accordingly, the Bible has been lowered, first, to the position of other sacred books, and then to that of books in general; the Lord Jesus Christ, its central figure, denuded of his scriptural features and functions, is reduced to no more than the proportions of a second Socrates; and his resur-

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rection, together with the miracles ascribed to him in the Gospels, is undervalued, if not disowned. Christianity thus stripped of distinctive features is in danger of sinking into a theism, having either a deistical or a pantheistical basis, the possible result being to substitute speculation for the Gospel, and to transform the Church of Christ into a school of philosophy. In the degree in which this transformation is effected, earnestness dwindles, activity subsides, and religion decays.

Yet, at no period did a more urgent call for remedial and restorative agencies proceed from society. The call will be effectually heard by such as have the spirit of Christ. How important is it, then, to make Christ known as he is enshrined in the heart of the Church universal, and as he is depicted in the New Testament.

Of that view self-sacrifice is the essence. The Gospel is far more than any system of merely human origin. It is God's remedy for the regeneration of the human race, stopped and stunted in its growth by sin. As such it is "the kingdom of God" (Matt. vi., 33); or the rule of the Heavenly Father in men's hearts and lives, proclaimed and exemplified in Christ crucified and living evermore, so as to become the divinely-sanctioned medium of the reconciliation of the world to God (2 Cor. v., 19). This "Gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. iv., 23), or the sovereignty of God in Christ (2 Cor. v., 19), the New Testament presents in three aspects; 1st, the Gospel of fact, set forth by the first three Evangelists; 2nd, the Gospel of the spirit, set forth by the fourth; 3rd, "the Gospel of the grace of God" (Rom. v., 15), set forth by Paul. These aspects represent the same divine reality, which, ensuing from the Infinite Father's pity for his guilty children, and involving the best system of ethics, incomparably surpasses all ethical systems, if only because it heals, invigorates, and expands by vitalising and renewing.

The task I have here had in hand has compelled me to assume a hostile attitude more than I could wish. As far, however, as what was due to my subject permitted, I have been positive and constructive in my teachings, assured that the best way to put an end to error is to sow the seeds of truth, especially when one's duty is to present the claims of Christ and Christianity to the willing acceptance of the world.

Writing as I do, with a view to general instruction, I have avoided all learned apparatus, and aimed to make my pages intelligible and, so far as the subject admits, interesting and attractive.

JOHN R. BEARD.

THE MEADOWS, ALTRINCHAM,
October 12th, 1868.

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Christ and Christianity being in God, the religion is universal in aim, spirit, tendency, and effect, and, consequently, will become universal in prevalence ; (2) the evidence of John the Baptist that Jesus is the impersonation of the divine tenderness ; (3) the acceptance of that testimony by disciples of the Baptist ; (4) beautiful illustration of John's testimony in the miracle at Cana ; (5) argument from the expulsion of the traffickers from the Temple ; (6) from the conversation with Nicodemus ; (7) the universalism of Jesus in contrast with the localism of the Samaritans ; (8) the cure of one of Herod's courtiers ; (9) the restoring of the Bethesda paralytic to soundness ; (10) the feeding of the five thousand ; (11) the rescue of his disciples by Jesus walking on the sea ; (12) the resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection of Jesus ; the former remains entire after two assaults by Renan ; the latter illustrated and confirmed by (1) natural circumstances attending it, and (2) natural circumstances following it. Evidence of Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, the Epistle to Diognetus, Justin.—Page 317-445.

“ Well may he hesitate who undertakes to write the life of Christ. Lavater shrank from the task : I write the life of Christ—I ? Never. The Evangelists have written it as it can and ought to be written. Let us not *write*, but *become* it. Who will not agree with Anna Maria Von Schurmann, that such an attempt is to paint the sun with charcoal ; the life of a Christian is the best picture of the life of Christ. Yet, why should not history, though assured that its description must be far behind the reality, occupy itself with the highest manifestation that has appeared in humanity—a manifestation which sanctifies, and does not spurn the labours of men ? The artist paints a picture of Christ without aid from history, merely from contemplating the idea he has formed of the Saviour. But we have the lineaments of the historical Christ, in fragments at least ; and there is wanting only insight into their connexion to mould them into an harmonious whole. We feel the necessity of calling up vividly before our minds, in our own stage of life and scientific progress, this realised ideal which belongs to all ages ; and at particular epochs, in the mutations of time, this necessity is always felt anew. The image of Christ, not of yesterday, nor to-day, ever renews its youth among men, and as the world grows old penetrates it with a heaven-tending youthful vigour. The peculiarities of different periods must be distinguished. Some periods mark a new creation in the Christian church, and in humanity, as already manifested ; others, by crisis and dissolution, prepare the way for it. Our age belongs to the latter class ; we stand between the old world and a new one to be called into being by the ever old and ever new Gospel. For the fourth time Christianity is preparing a new epoch in the life of humanity. Our labours can be but preparatory to that new creation, when, after the regeneration of life and science, the great acts of God shall be proclaimed with new tongues of fire.”—
 “ Neander, Life of Christ : ” Preface.



STUDIES IN THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF RENAN.

CHAPTER I.

RENAN'S LINEAGE, EDUCATION, LITERARY CAREER, AND CHARACTER :—
HOW FAR IS HE FITTED TO WRITE A LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS?

JOSEPH ERNEST RENAN, Member of the French Institute, was born the 27th of February, 1823, at Treguier, a small town in Brittany, the north-west promontory of France. His name is in some sort stamped on the land. If it is not to be recognised in Rennes, the capital, it is doubtless found in the saint of the same name. How far this member of the Romanist *Dii Minores* would be disposed to acknowledge his namesake now is a point we must leave to the proper authorities. To the readers of English history the land will be better known by its great naval arsenal, Brest, with its capacious and well-protected harbour, and its hulks, in which thousands of convicts have been brutalised by cruel punishments. The country, generally inhabited by peasants—rude, yet sturdy and persevering—is not without literary distinction, and may specially claim honour from giving birth to Lanjuinais, who, from the position of a rural pleader, made his way, during the great revolutionary struggle, into the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Peerage, by words, and writings, and acts—asserting, with force and eloquence, the great principles of civil and religious liberty. Renan prides himself on the land of his nativity : —

“We Bretons, we especially who still cling to our native soil, and are only one or two generations away from the life which is hid in nature, we believe that man owes more to his blood than to himself, and that our first worship is toward our fathers. Once in my life I have desired to say what I think of a race which I account good, although I know that when one turns his sense of right to his own account, it is capable of committing many an act of simplicity. The ancient recollections of that race are more than a curious object of study for me; it is a region over which my imagination has always delighted to wander, and in which I am fond of seeking a retreat as in an ideal mother country.

"O fathers of the obscure tribe, at whose hearth I breathed in my faith in the invisible; humble clan of labourers and mariners, to whom I owe the power of preserving the vigour of my soul in an extinct land, and an age without hope, doubtless you wandered over those enchanted seas where our father Brandon* sought for the land of promise; you contemplated the green islands, whose verdure bathed itself in the waves; you traversed with Saint Patrick (450 A.D.) the circles of that world which our eyes can see no longer. Sometimes I regret that your bark, in quitting Ireland or Wales, was not under the direction of other winds. I see them in my dreams. I see those peaceful cities of Clonfert and Lismore, where I could wish to have lived, nurtured by the sounds of thy bells, and the recital of thy mysterious Odysseys. Both of us, useless in this world, which understands only him who masters, or him who serves it, let us together fly to that splendid Eden of the soul's joys, the same that our saints saw in their dreams. Let us find consolation in our chimeras, in our nobleness, in our disdain. Who knows if our reveries are not truer than reality. God is my witness, venerable fathers, that now and again I feel as if I were your consciousness, and as if in me you come again to life and speech."—"Essais," Pref., p. xviii.

How far these words, which are a true mirror of the writer in his mature life, represent nascent states of mind in the boy and the youth we possess no means to determine; but certainly in his Celtic temperament there was a soil fit to produce the sombre sensibility that breathes in almost every page of his writings, and which must have done much to shape and colour, if not to form his philosophy and his religion. The dark side of things had charms for him which he was no less unwilling than unable to resist. Contrasting, unfavourably to the former, the false liberalism, which finds national good in forms and institutions, with the true liberalism, which has its sap and its fruitage in individual culture, he remarks in the same connection (p. xii.):—

"I know that to many such fears for the future will appear an anachronism, and that they will find in them an effect of that melancholy which certain persons, indulgent for the present, even as the present is indulgent for them, have, it is said, laid to my charge. But each has his own character; though occasionally I am tempted to envy the gift of those happy natures, easily and always satisfied, I yet avow that on reflection I am proud of my *pessimism*, and that if I felt it softening down, while my age remained the same, I should eagerly try to ascertain which of the fibres of my heart had lost its tension. Some day, possibly, such vigour may abate, and if anything could conduce to the change, it would doubtless be that those persons whose *optimism* does not appear to me justified, should, without taking to melancholy (to which they are not naturally disposed), come to understand that what forms this man's joy may not constitute the happiness of all."

Among the good qualities which distinguished this branch of the Celtic race, Renan possesses his full share of industry and persistence. Even in his earliest days, possibly traces of its self-

* ST. BRANDON.—"There is also a famous legend called 'St. Brandon's Voyage.' The worthy saint set sail from the coast of Ireland, and held on his way till he arrived at the moon, which he found to be the location of hell. Here he saw Judas Iscariot in execrable tortures, regularly respited, however, every week, from Saturday eve till Sunday eve."—Alger's "Doctrine of a Future Life," p. 591.

will and obstinacy, which certainly appear in later periods, may have exercised some undesirable influence on the train of the student's thoughts, and the career which he adopted in preference to that for which he was originally designed. Certainly in his manhood he wrote somewhat paradoxically, thus :—

“It is neither breadth, nor penetration, nor curiosity of mind that makes a worthy man ; systematic obstinacy, so injurious in all branches of pure speculation, is, on the contrary, the very condition of practical wisdom, and its securest foundation.”—“*Essais*,” p. 11.

A more amiable side of his Breton nature and associations manifests itself when he writes :—

“I could not, I confess, reside or even travel with pleasure in a country in which there were neither archives nor antiquities. What forms the interest and the beauty of things is the trace of humanity, which has lived, loved, and suffered there. A small town of Umbria, with its Etruscan walls, its Roman ruins, its Mediæval towers, its shops as they were at the Revival of Letters, its Jesuit churches of the seventeenth century, will always have greater charms for me than our cities, ever built over and over again, in which the past seems as if it yet stood, not as a matter of right, but by favour, and as a theatrical decoration. The whitewash, which hides the traces of age ; the spade, which bears away the old seats of human life, are the natural enemies of all poetry. In the same way moral worth is no extemporaneous product ; it is the fruit of generations. No abstract principle, be it philosophical, be it religious, has the power to create a worthy man. Here is a person who boasts of having begun to have some probity the day when, and only the day when, he underwent conversion. O the folly ! and O how should I distrust such a man, if I did not think he had calumniated himself by a figure of rhetoric, and for the good of some favourite cause. Many things, and things excellent, of the intellectual kind are young in the world ; but it is not so in the moral order ; here there is no room for discovery or invention. In morals, the old is the true ; for the old is honour, the old is liberty.”—“*Essais*,” p. 13.

Renan received the rudiments of his education in the small seminary of his native place. Through the good offices of a fellow-townsmen, the Abbé Trevaux, he obtained a free scholarship in the Parisian College of Saint Nicholas, which was under the direction of the Abbé Dupanloup, afterwards Bishop of Orleans, and now his most active opponent. The settlement of the young provincial in the capital was not without marked influence on the formation of his character. Far different was the stimulus he underwent in Paris to that which he experienced in Treguier. Both the ecclesiastical and the literary discipline was more severe. The mental atmosphere of one of the first cities of the world penetrated into his cloistral seclusion. Yet the young disciple, absorbed in self-contemplation, was little open to influences from without. Uncompanionable, taking no part in the games of his fellow pupils, because averse to all subjection to their wills, he lived only for his studies, in which he accordingly made great proficiency.

He soon found an opportunity of gaining distinction. In the third class he carried off the History prize by an essay on the genius of Alexander the Great. The rhetorical brilliance with

which he adorned his composition he had borrowed from Châteaubriand's writings, whose "Génie du Christianisme" (Genius of Christianity) he had studied with enthusiasm. Variety and loftiness of expression, early cultivated qualities of his style, contributed no little to the success which he afterwards attained. In 1842, Renan left the small seminary of Saint Nicholas, and entered the larger establishment of Issy, in the department of the Seine. In this academy, which was a branch of the College of Saint Sulpice, in Paris, Renan devoted himself chiefly to the cultivation of mathematics and philosophy. His favourite studies were the writings of the philosopher Jouffroy, whose moral philosophy, inclining to the views of Guizot, and mixed with Protestant elements, formed a sharp contrast to the exuberance of Châteaubriand's Catholicism. Feeling himself unable to reconcile this antagonism, Renan sought an escape from his philosophic doubts in the abandonment of himself to the study of modern languages. Not improbably the circumstance that his sister, Henrietta, was at the time a governess in Germany, drew his attention to the literature of that country, and acquaintance with its noble tongue led him back to philosophy, by opening before his eye the mental depths of the great German thinkers, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Not only did he owe to his sister the prolific consequences of this impulse, but he was directly guided in his experiences of this new world by her lofty spirit, which was familiar with German thought. Gratitude, therefore, as well as brotherly affection, induced him to make loving and reverent mention of his relative in the following terms:—

TO THE PURE SOUL
OF MY SISTER HENRIETTA,
WHO DIED AT

BYBLOS, THE 24TH SEPTEMBER, 1861.

"From the bosom of God on which thou reposest, dost thou remember those long days at Ghazir, where alone, with thee, I wrote these pages, inspired by the spots which we had just traversed? Silent at my side thou didst read over every page, and copied it as soon as written, while the sea, the villages, the ravines, the mountains, spread out at our feet. When the oppressive light of day had given place to the innumerable army of stars, thy acute and delicate questions, thy discreet doubts brought me back to the sublime object of our common thoughts. One day thou toldest me that thou lovedst this book because it pleased thee. If sometimes thou fearedst for it the narrow judgment of frivolous people, thou wert always persuaded that truly religious souls would sooner or later take pleasure therein. In the midst of these sweet meditations death struck us both with his pinion, the sleep of fever seized us in the same hour; for myself I awoke, and awoke alone. Now thou sleepest in the land of Adonis, near sacred Byblos, and the sacred waters to which the women of the ancient mysteries resorted to shed their tears there. Reveal to me, oh my good Genius! reveal to me whom thou lovedst, those truths which reign over death; prevent its being feared, and make it almost loved."

The first words of these dedicatory lines recall the simple and touching words of Mrs. Hemans :—

“Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit rest thee now !
E'en while with us thy footstep trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust to its narrow house beneath !
Soul to its place on high !
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.”

Both pieces advert to some influence which charms away the fear of death. The influence is connected with the last hours of an intimate companion and beloved friend. The poetess found the priceless balm in the life-giving faith of the Gospel ; what with the philosopher were “those truths which reign over death, prevent its being feared, and make it almost loved,” will appear in the sequel. To me, who know that they present the world beyond the tomb as a dreary blank, this fraternal farewell to a fondly cherished sister is very painful, and that the more because we have here what we shall often find as we proceed, the most sacred words of Christianity employed to designate things which have nothing in them more substantial than a certain poetical delicacy. To offer such tinsel as sterling gold on topics so solemn and so tender, appears to me a distressing profanation.

By no means, however, do I judge Renan by my own impressions. With a history so different as his and mine, there must be differences of moral habitude and moral taste. His use of religious and even Christian phraseology is too constant not to have some ground in his inmost nature, and his love, possession, and exercise of mental freedom have been purchased at too high a price not to guarantee sincerity, whatever law that most important quality may obey in him. To us it may seem strange to find the all but empty things of an extreme negative philosophy set forth and set off in the saintly attire of the sanctuary, but those misunderstand and misrepresent the man who affirm that his object, whatever they may think of his means, is somewhat else than the promotion of what to him is truth. Any way, if his own words may be believed, the love of truth is with him a passion :—

“These researches had for me early in life the highest interest ; in some form or other, but always more lofty, they will remain the principal object of my curiosity. Were I, as so many others, the slave of my desires, if interest or vanity guided me in the direction of my labours, I might be turned away from studies which are commonly rewarded only by insult. But desiring nothing except to do good, asking from study no other recompense than itself, I dare affirm that there is no human consideration that has the power to make me say a word more or less than I have resolved to say. The liberty I require, being only that of science, cannot escape from my hands. If the seventeenth century had its Holland, it is difficult that in these days, whatever moral timidity may prevail, I should not be able to find a corner of the earth where

I may philosophise at my ease. Consequently nothing will make me deviate from the plan I have traced for myself, and which I regard as my own line of duty—an inflexible search after truth, according to the measure of my strength, by all the means of legitimate investigation, the frank and firm expression of the results which seem to me probable or certain, apart from any premeditated application, or any settled form of thought; the docility to correct myself when the criticisms of competent persons on the progress of science shall give just occasion. As to the attacks of ignorance and fanaticism, they will afflict without shaking me, when I think them sincere, and when I am unable to do so, I hope that habit will enable me to preserve my equanimity.”—“*Etudes*,” Pref., xxvii.

Yet the abuse of Christian phraseology which we have met with, and which will occur again and again, I must condemn as well as deplore. In effect it is deceptive, whatever it may be in origin and motive. To such an extent is the use of religious diction in a sense different, if not opposite, to what is common, that his “*Life of Jesus*” and his “*Apostles*” must convey to the uninitiated a meaning the reverse of what their author intends. A deep conviction to this effect has been a principal inducement with me in preparing these pages. I think it my duty, not simply to protest against a practice which on my part would be dishonest, and which cannot fail to blind and mislead. Indeed, the practice is too common on the continent to be passed without exposure and reprobation. I give an instance or two. Strauss, in his first “*Life of Jesus*,” after having, as he holds, cut up by the roots the history of Jesus as narrated in the Gospels, proceeds to reconstruct the edifice even of dogmatic orthodoxy out of the filaments of Hegelian metaphysics, employing in the process the ordinary terms of the popular churches. A more extreme disciple of the same school, Feuerbach, placed at the head of a certain work these words: “*By this book I have quarrelled with God and with the world*,” and yet the work professed to treat of “*The Essence of Christianity*.” This open avowal of Atheism Renan qualifies as “*the pedantry of hardihood*.” (“*Etudes*,” p. 417.) Blameworthy as it is, it has at least the credit of openness, while to assail Christianity under the mask of its own diction, wears an appearance of duplicity.

Leaving the seminary of Issy, Renan entered that of Saint Sulpice, where he was to complete his theological studies. Here the oriental languages engaged all his attention. Hebrew he learned from the professor La Hir, toward whom he cherished a lasting sense of gratitude. He also made rapid and solid acquisitions in Syriac and Chaldee. As a consequence of his success, he soon obtained the repute of being an excellent orientalist. These studies have proved most conducive to the fame which he has since gained in the literary world.

Meanwhile he had passed through the preliminary steps of the Roman priest, having received the tonsure and taken the four lower vows. The time came for him to determine whether he should complete the consecration of himself to the church. He

stood at the threshold ; should he pass into the Holy of Holies ? Long and deeply did he meditate on the step. This was what he had originally devoted himself to, and for which he had gone through a systematic and laborious training. The future presented to him an open, and in many respects inviting path. Possibly there awaited him somewhere on the road dignities, power, and opulence. Refuse the prospect, and the alternative was a life of struggle, perhaps of ignominy and contempt. The failure was probable on one side, while on the other the success was almost certain. Which should he choose ? He chose what to him was morally "the better part," for conscience told him that his state of mind was not in harmony with the church, and he shrank from taking a position which would have internally convicted him of dishonesty. Preferring poor freedom to chains of gold, he renounced religion and became a devotee of philosophy. The announcement of the decision was not made suddenly. Before he finally broke with the church, the principal of Saint Sulpice, Dupanloup, spoke to him of his ordination, stating that the time for it was at hand. If we may trust our authority, Renan coldly and daringly replied, "I do not believe in God." "The jest is ill-timed, or you are gone mad," was the rejoinder. Renan, with icy composure, answered, "I do not believe in God." "Leave the college, then, and leave it forthwith," said the doctor ; "here, take these five hundred francs to meet your immediate wants, and let me see your face no more."

It is, however, possible that the story was invented, or any way coloured, by Renan's enemies, in order to put upon him the stigma of open and reckless Atheism ; since on leaving Saint Sulpice he obtained, through his old director, a literary post in the College of Stanislas. Whatever the fact may be, it is certain that in his pamphlet, published in 1863, to counteract the effect of Renan's writings, the bishop reproaches his old pupil in terms whose dark and mysterious import may allude to some collegiate profanity. Quoting the following passage from Renan :—

"The material temples of the real Jesus will sink to the ground ; the tabernacles in which you think you keep his flesh and his blood will break in pieces. Already the roof lets in the light of day, and the waters of heaven descend on the face of the kneeling believer."

The Prelate remarks :—

"I will not comment on these words, I should have too much to say. I cannot, however, refrain from adding that among the sacred things which Mr. Renan ought to respect, and which he does not respect, there is one of which it ought to be ever impossible for him to speak ; it is the Eucharist. He understands me, and I know what I say. To-morrow, under the resplendent roofs of the Paris Cathedral, three thousand *kneeling believers* will reply to this blasphemy and confound the blasphemer."—"Avertissement," p. 119.

If these epithets sound harshly, you and I must remember that our Protestant associations supply no measure of the ignominy

which follows apostacy from Romanism. In that church sacred orders are indelible. Once a priest, always a priest, and the priestly character is assumed from the first step. When the hair is once shaved from the crown of the head, and the devotee is what is called *tonsured*, he is for life consecrated to the service of religion, and if he quits that service, he is a deserter, a renegade. In ordinary cases, the solemn impressions received in the successive processes of sacerdotal consecration sink into the young heart too deeply to be ever totally removed. Remaining there after you have renounced the altar, they may create in you a sense of injury as a yoke imposed by another's hand, and so chafe your temper, or even harass your conscience, for the remainder of your days. This point is brought out with cutting effect by one less scrupulous than the discreet bishop, in a small publication, of which the twenty-sixth edition lies before me ("L'Evangile selon Renan" par Henri Lasserre):—

"For any one who has any knowledge of human nature, it is not difficult to penetrate to the mystery of this beclouded soul. This man, whose forehead was at his entrance into life marked with the ineffaceable seal of baptism, who, according to the touching expression of the Catechism was 'made a child of God and of the church,' who was incorporated in Jesus Christ, who became a member of Jesus Christ, and that for ever; this man, I say, now sees the primitive title of his glory changed to an everlasting brand. . . . Hence all those books. M. Renan takes so much trouble to prove that God does not exist only to convince himself. He is ever trying to tear his gown from his shoulders. He wants to relieve his mind from a secret trouble. He wants to pass a sponge over his memory. He cannot but remember the benefits he received from the men whom he spends his days in assailing. He was poor; he received alms, material as well as spiritual, from the motherly hands of a church which he now attempts to destroy. Hence his implacable enmity." (Chap. ii., p. 24.)

The literary establishments through which Renan passed bear the name of seminaries. They are theological schools or colleges, which owe their existence to the Council of Trent. Down to the sixteenth century clerical novices pursued their theological studies in the universities, which held so high a place in the world of culture during the middle ages; and before the universities the councils had established in each diocese, near the residence of the bishop, a sort of high school, in which such as were destined to the priesthood received suitable instruction. These episcopal schools, after flourishing a long while, gradually lost their value. A substitute was needed in order to stamp on candidates for holy orders a deep and ineffaceable image of Romanism. The need was specially felt when Protestantism, profiting by all the new light of the Revival of Letters, proved too strong for mother church. Hence the seminaries, which were specially intended to meet science with science, and skill with skill. For these ends they were made exclusively theological and canonical, and a species of ascetic discipline, borrowed from the religious orders, was imposed. When the intended result was produced, one who was

a priest and a monk entered public life. The union of the qualities of the two characters produced commonly a bigotted as well as able advocate of the Papal See. Hence a seminairist was next door to a Jesuit. But this rigour of life and contraction of aim were the very things to repel and even disgust a youth, who, like Renan, loved liberty, preferred byeways as well as high-ways, and in whose breast philosophical notions and desires began to ferment at an early day. Nevertheless, there ensued a general culture which could not fail to be valuable. In describing the training of Lamennais, Renan describes the favourable side of his own :—

“ The seminary had not less influence on the singular person whom I am trying to characterise. Ecclesiastical education, which has grave disadvantages when you have to form the citizen and the practical man, has excellent effects to awaken and develop originality of mind. The instruction of the university, which is certainly more regular, more solid, more systematic, has the disadvantage of being too uniform, and of having too little scope to the individual taste, whether of the professor or the pupil. The church is in literature less dogmatic than the university. In its taste may be less pure, the method less severe ; but the literary superstition of the seventeenth century prevails less. The substance is perhaps less sacrificed to the form ; there is more declamation, but less rhetoric. This is true, especially of the higher order of teaching. Free from all official inspection and control, the intellectual discipline of the large seminaries is that of the fullest liberty ; nothing, or all but nothing, being required of the scholar as a rigorous duty, he remains in full possession of himself ; add to this, absolute solitude, long hours of silence and meditation, constant absorption in an object superior to all personal views, and you will understand what an admirable atmosphere those religious establishments furnish for developing the reflective faculties. Such a mode of life is death to a feeble mind, but gives singular energy to a mind capable of thinking for itself. Men, indeed, come forth from them somewhat hard, because they have there been trained to place a number of things above their interests, their pleasures, and even their individual feelings ; but this is the very condition of great deeds, which are never accomplished without an impassioned disinterestedness. Here is the reason why our theological schools are a source so productive of distinguished characters, and hold so high a place in our literary statistics.”—“*Essais*,” p. 148.

Renan turned philosopher, remained a Roman Catholic, at least in spirit. The same fact is averred in somewhat different terms by one of the first lights of contemporaneous French literature :—

“ Arriving at science through theology, Renan has always remained a theologian. . . . M. Renan is himself probably ignorant of all that he owes to Saint Sulpice. It is true that entering the seminary is not enough for you to profit thereby ; you must also abandon it. M. Renan did abandon it, and here doubtless is the reason why he has turned to so good an account what he learned there.”—Scherer; *Mélanges de Critique Religieuse*; Paris, 1860; p. 523.

It is not, however, impossible for the pupil to have learnt more than was irreproachable in itself. Romanist ethics, as employed in the training of priests, are not of the simplest kind. However this may be, the sarcastic critic I cited but now (Lasserre) recognises the general fact in these words :—

“ There are two men in Renan, the collegian and the something else. On one side he has a Christian imagination, on the other he seems to have an

atheist's heart. When he wishes to narrate the life of 'the Son of Man,' he consults his imagination; when he wishes to reason and conclude, he listens to his heart and says, 'There is no God.' Frightful contrast! The imagination is a liar, but the soul is blighted and dead." (p. 19.)

"The incense of the sanctuary embalms the vague depths of his style. Strange contradiction! He does not believe in God, but his fervour is not lessened by his lack of faith. Till now atheists have desired to abolish religion; he, not at all. He kneels before an altar which owns no God. He adores with a devout ardour Him in whom he does not believe. 'Love is given without faith,' he gravely remarks. He wants to found, not the desolating philosophy of Atheism, but the tender religion of nothingness. 'I adore thee, I kiss thy sacred feet, O my well-beloved, O my God—who dost not exist; and it is even because thou art not that I offer thee adoration so ardent.' 'Not in vain did he of old wear the white surplice of the Levite; if he has lost his faith, he has not got rid of his mysticism. He is a pious atheist; a mystic atheist.'" (pp. 19-21.)

That there is an air of mystical piety about Renan is not to be denied. He does not own himself an atheist, and how far his doctrines justify the name, facts will determine. Here it must suffice to add, that what he says of the Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, may, with some slight qualification, be said of himself:—

"He rejects all assimilation of God to creatures. He dares not ascribe to God even existence, unity, eternity, lest these attributes should be considered as distinct from the divine substance, and specially lest you admit something which resembles the Christian hypostases."—"Averroes," 179.

There is no reason to be surprised that the defenders of Roman Catholicism should be less good-humoured than is desirable, for while they regard Renan as an apostate, they are deeply and painfully wounded by his shafts, which, when not poisoned, are piercing. No blow so effective as that with which the disabused priest cuts down the idol. The fact is described by Renan's own graphic pen:—

"It is recorded that when the missionaries from Rome, after having converted the Saxons of Northumbria to Christianity, urged them to hurl down with their own hands the idols they had hitherto worshipped, no person was found who durst lift a weapon against those images so long consecrated by faith and by prayer. In the midst of the general hesitation a priest arose, and with one blow from a hatchet cut down the god whose vanity he knew better than any one. A priest's attack has always a particular character of cold-bloodedness and daring; in the blows which he deals you recognise a certainty of hand which a layman never attains. The latter, accustomed to regard the sanctuary from a distance, approaches it only with respect, even when the divinity has abandoned it; but the priest, knowing its secrets, throws it open to vulgar eyes with the audacity of a former friend."—"Essais," p. 142.

A general influence of an evil kind was undoubtedly exercised on Renan by his Romanist education. Led by all the circumstances of his early life to identify the religion of his fathers with the religion of Christ, and compelled by conscience to renounce the former, he became an indiscriminate and unsparing assailant of the latter. The absolutism of the church of his infancy and his youth clave to him after he had exchanged the priest's gown for the philosopher's cloak. Become an iconoclast, he must break

in pieces all the imagery not only of the Roman church but the Protestant as well. A reformed Christianity is a kind of middle term which he cannot endure, though he professes to love moderation and shades of thought. Unquestionably, supernaturalism as a whole must be cleared away, and in his view that involves the denial of everything transcendent. Hence, in his essay on Dr. Channing, he goes so far as to declare :—

“For my part, I would more readily accept the authority of the church than that of the Bible. The church is more human, more living; however motionless you suppose it, it yields better to the wants of each epoch. You can deal with it more easily than with a book that has been closed eighteen hundred years.”—“*Etudes*,” p. 380.

He carries his extravagance so far as to write:—

“The habitual reading of the Bible is a necessary consequence of the Protestant system;—is this study then so great a good, and is the Catholic church so guilty for having hidden the book or put a seal thereon? Certainly not; and I am tempted to declare that the most magnificent stroke of that great establishment is its substituting itself, itself alive and active in place of a dumb authority.”—“*Etudes*,” 384.

I have only to turn over a few pages of the volume from which I now cite to meet with a high eulogy of the Bible, as being the great religious classic of the world; but passing by this self-contradiction, of which numerous instances appear in his writings, so as to justify an impression already mentioned, to the effect that Renan seems to be

“Two single gentlemen rolled into one,”

I must here complete the illustration on which I am engaged :—

“If the creed were reduced to belief in God and Christ, what would be gained by the simplification? Would scepticism be satisfied? Would the formula of the universe become more clear and more complete? Would the destiny of man be less impenetrable? With his reformed creed, Channing does not avoid the objections of unbelief better than the Catholic theologians. No! he admits the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and does not admit his deity; he admits the Bible, and does not admit hell. He displays all the susceptibilities of a schoolman to establish against the Trinitarians in what sense Jesus is the Son of God, and in what he is not. Yet if you admit that there is a real and miraculous existence from one end to the other, why not frankly call him divine? The one does not demand a greater effort of belief than the other. In truth, on this road the first step is everything; you must attempt no compromise with the supernatural; faith is an unbroken whole; once sacrificed, you are not to reclaim in detail that which you have given up altogether.”—“*Etudes*,” p. 377.

The surrender demanded is the renunciation of every super-sensible reality. As criticism takes Romanism from you, so it also leaves you nothing but the flitting shadows which positive philosophy may have spared. Renan, however, has one consolation. Romanism was a narrow place in which he could not move at his ease. Beyond its limits, indeed, the world is beclouded

and cheerless, yet he cannot endure the restrictions, and must buy his freedom at any price :—

“So absolute are the doctrines of Catholicism, that the word *liberty* cannot have for Catholics the same sense that it has for us. For the Catholic, liberty cannot be as it is for the true liberal, the right of every man to think and to do whatever seems to him good within the limits in which the same right of others remains intact. Liberty with the Catholic is liberty for himself ; that is, for his own truth, and his own efforts on behalf of that truth. Many Catholics, I know, understand liberty in a freer manner, and would be ready to give to others what they claim for themselves ; but let them allow me to tell them that in this they are not in agreement with the essential principles of their faith. The moment that you declare a certain doctrine absolute truth, apart from which there is no salvation, you must demand for it exclusive prerogative ; the rights of truth transcend all other rights, and the greatest service you can render to your fellow-men is to put them into the possession of the truth, whatever be the cost. The decisive authority in such a matter is that of the church. Let us listen to the Encyclical Letter in which Pope Gregory VII. condemned the opinions of Lamennais : ‘ From the foul source of indifferentism flows that absurd and erroneous maxim, or rather that madness, namely, that *liberty of conscience* ought to be granted and guaranteed. The way to this pernicious error is prepared by the full and unrestricted liberty of opinions which is spreading far and wide to the detriment of civil and religious life, while some, with extreme impudence, repeatedly declare that from such licence some good accrues to religion. But did not Saint Augustin ask, ‘ What more effectual to kill the soul than the liberty of error ? ’ In effect, every restriction being removed, what can keep men on the paths of truth ? their nature, inclined to evil, falls into the abyss.’ And farther on : ‘ With this is connected that deadly liberty toward which no one can feel too much horror—the liberty of the bookseller to publish any book whatever, a liberty which some dare to ask for, and to extend with equal heat and clamour.’ The letter written by Cardinal Pacca to Lamennais, in explanation of the Pope’s Encyclic, leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the cited words : ‘ The Holy Father also disapproves and repels your doctrines relative to the liberty of worship, and to civil and political liberty. The doctrines of *L’Avenir* (published by Lamennais), touching the liberty of worship and the liberty of the press, are equally very reprehensible, and in opposition to the teaching, the maxims, and the policy of the church. They have much astonished and grieved the Holy Father, for if in certain circumstances prudence requires their toleration as a less evil, such doctrines can never be presented by a Catholic as good and desirable.’ These are the deceptions to which are exposed the sincere and generous hearts who fancy they can associate Catholicism with modern tendencies. Nearly always the church herself undertakes the duty of making them feel their mission, and of teaching them that the party which condemns every liberal idea in the bosom of Catholicism is the only consistent one.”—“*Essais*,” pp. 159-162.

The only option left to Renan was an unsparing philosophy. Bankrupt in faith, he must try his fortune in the career of its antagonist. The temple of literature opened its doors to him, and he entered it, hoping to find it the portico to the functions of the university. Having quitted the seminary of Stanislas, he set about preparing for collegiate honours and professional appointments. These were to him dark days of poverty and privation, for private tuition was his only means of subsistence ; yet his Breton strength of will broke not down in his garret of the Rue de l’Epée by his solitary night lamp, and in studies not always sustained by the ne-

cessaries of life. His perseverance was not long in earning a reward. In the year 1847 the French Institute offered a prize for the best essay on the Shemitic languages. It was won by Renan, though only four-and-twenty years of age. The gaining of this, the Volney prize, was the turning-point in his future career. The high distinction gave him in the world of letters a position which made for him a path through life. The essay grew in time into two quarto volumes, containing a "General History and Comparative System of the Shemitic Languages," which do for the Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Arabic, and minor dialects, the same that had not long before been done by Bopp, for the Indo-European, or, as the present term is, the Aryan tongues. The work would have been a great achievement even for a scholar ripened by years of suitable study; as proceeding from a young man, it deserves high commendation.

Yet here we have to regret that tendency to hasty generalisations by which he continues to be misled in his latest works. He erects the conceptions of his own mind into absolute truths, and by those truths he not only determines the movements of the human race, but fixes the possibilities and impossibilities of the universe. On this point Scherer has well remarked :—

"I unrestrictedly approve the distrust which he constantly professes of *à priori* reasoning and logical methods, but I cannot conceal some surprise at seeing the same scholar (in his 'Shemitic Antiquities') elevate a small number of facts into historic laws, and apply the results thus obtained to the ulterior elucidation of history. I do not, I confess, like to meet in a serious writer with axioms such as this: 'The desert is monotheistic.' This involuntarily calls the gross abuses of pretentious formulas in which the talent of M. Michelet is drowned. But this is not all. To his favourite thesis of the primitive Monotheism of the Shemitic races M. Renan has sacrificed the information we possess respecting the greater number of the peoples in question, and even that which offers itself to an impartial study of the Old Testament. Here, too, we have arbitrary generalising. Three grand religions, he tells us—namely, Mosaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism—were born among the Shemites: now these religions are monotheistic, and the only religions that have that character; is it not then evident that Monotheism is an attribute of the Shemitic race, and consequently that it has always formed its distinctive trait? But I look at the facts a little more closely, and this is what I find: In the first place, the three religions mentioned sink to a single one, for Mosaism and Christianity are but one; that is, the Biblical or prophetic religion, and Mohammedanism is nothing else than a Judeo-Christian heresy. In the second place, except the Hebrews, all the Shemites were Pagans—that is, given to some form of the worship of nature—down to the time when they themselves embraced Christianity or Mohammedanism. There remain then the Hebrews alone, whose history, well read, would perhaps show the contrary to that which M. Renan thinks he finds there. Thus the historian has imposed on facts too narrow a law."—"Mélanges," pp. 527, 8.

Notwithstanding its blemishes, the work was well received, and created confidence in its author's pen. His co-operation was eagerly sought for by Parisian publishers. In the year 1848 he set on foot a journal, entitled *La Liberté de Penser* (*The Free Thinker*), in which he handled, in a very free way, critical and

philosophical questions of the highest and most delicate nature. In 1850 he began in that periodical his preliminary studies for "The Life of Christ."

At the same time he contributed to the *Journal des Débats* and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—periodicals of the highest literary character, and whose influence, passing beyond the limits of France, reaches most of the first thinkers in the civilised world. While thus ministering to his necessities in journalistic literature, he remained faithful to his early vocation, which was to secure to him the most envied of literary honours by opening to him the doors of the French Institute. This high distinction he obtained by an historical essay, "Sur l'étude de la langue Grecque au Moyen Age" (On the study of the Greek language in the middle ages). Appointed by *L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (The Academy of Inscriptions and Polite Literature) to a literary mission in Italy in 1849, he brought back from his travels materials for a volume on the philosopher Averroes, which he published in 1853. In April, 1851, he was appointed Superintendent of Manuscripts in the National Library. In 1856, he was elected a member of the Academy of Inscriptions, in succession to the eminent historian Augustin Thierry. On his return from the Syrian Mission he was decorated with the Legion of Honour.

Most creditable to Renan is this outline of his labours and distinctions. All honour to this charity-school boy; all honour to him who thus, before the age of thirty, has placed himself on the steps of the principal temple of fame in his native land. His tone of thought is not indeed our tone, and with the chief purpose of his life we almost totally disagree. None the less will we express our admiration of his high qualities of intellect, his power of self-denial, his wondrous diligence, his unflagging perseverance, his scholarship no less exact than multifarious.

While pursuing his career of literary diligence and activity, Renan had the honour of being selected by the French Government as the head of a scientific mission they had resolved to send into Syria for the investigation of Phenician antiquities. He proceeded to the seat of his grateful task accompanied by his sister Henrietta. He had undertaken the office the more willingly because it would afford him an opportunity of such a visit to Palestine as would be likely to render him valuable assistance in writing "The Life of Jesus," a labour which he had long contemplated. Whatever may be thought of the tenor of the volume he published on his return home, its picturesqueness is universally acknowledged. Renan has an eye and a pen for natural beauty, and many of the sketches and strokes in which he describes the chief localities of the New Testament bespeak the hand of a master.

It was a crisis in Renan's history when, on his return from Palestine, he took his seat as Professor of Hebrew in the College of France.

The duties of the chair involved what are termed the Shemitic languages, or the languages of the nations descended from Shem, including, with the Hebrew, the Arabic, the Chaldee, and the Syriac. As a linguist, Renan was undoubtedly well qualified for the office, though Romanist vexation has questioned the soundness of his oriental scholarship. Founded by Francis I., the chair was intended to serve the purposes of free and independent criticism, so far as the science of philosophy is concerned in its relation to the languages just mentioned. Yet, while the philosophic study of those tongues offered in itself a distinct and separate department of knowledge and instruction, it at the same time bordered on practical subjects of a nature the most delicate and momentous. The books which contain the sole classic remains of the literatures of the aforesaid languages form the sacred archives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islamism. The fact gave rise to an important problem, namely, how to interpret the contents of those books scientifically and faithfully, without touching on the doctrines which they teach and the opinions severally held by their readers. Was it possible, in any system of exegesis, to satisfy the conflicting views of Jew, Mohammedan, and Christian? and if Protestants were left without grievances, would not Roman Catholics feel injuries, and perhaps resent them? The difficulty was made the greater by the negative character of the professor's mind. And yet here was a door of escape, had he known how to profit by it, since believing little, if anything, of what is held by Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, he might, without compromising his own conscience, have confined himself to the common, yet narrow, line of linguistical science. Along this path he might have walked, and found not only sufficient occupation, but immunity from giving offence. Renan saw his danger, professed his intention to avoid it carefully, and yet ran into it as if with open eyes:—

“I know the difficulties inseparable from the chair which I have the honour to occupy. It is the privilege and the peril of Shemitic studies to touch the most important problems in the history of humanity. The free spirit acknowledges no restrictions; but the human race is far from having reached that degree of serene contemplation where you have no need to see God in such and such a particular order of facts, just because you see him in everything. Liberty, well understood, would bring forth and place the opposite enigmas side by side. But as I shall introduce no dogmatism into my course of instruction, as I shall always appeal to your reason, as I shall place before you what I think most probable, leaving you full liberty to judge for yourselves, who will have a right to complain? Those only who think they have a monopoly of truth. But they must needs renounce the sceptre of the world. In our days Galileo would no longer place himself on his knees to retract what he knew to be the truth.”—“Discours,” pp. 7, 8.

Extraordinary blindness; or, more extraordinary self-will! What is this but a stern defiance hurled at Romanism, and hurled by the hand of an unbeliever in all revelation? “The true view of God is to see Him in everything, and not to see Him in a

particular order of facts." That is, you are to disown Moses, Christ, and Mohammed as revealers of God, and believe in philosophy. And then the strange inconsistency of requiring religionists to abandon their claim to monopoly with the same breath as that by which you claim a monopoly yourself; for what else is the statement "that the free spirit acknowledges no restrictions?" Having thus diverged from impartiality in the opening lines of his inaugural address, the new professor hastens on to discourse at full liberty in the body of the composition. Instead of confining himself to the topic of the languages themselves, he hurries into the general subject of the results gained by not only philological but historical science within the last century. These, as he views them, he reports, and so is led to deal with the very points which he should have carefully avoided. On such an ocean he suffered shipwreck, as a matter of course. In other words, he wounded, grieved, and annoyed Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans alike. This, indeed, he did when he proscribed their several religions in wholesale. He repeated the injury and the offence again and again. The extent of the folly can be measured only by a perusal of the address itself. I am compelled to limit myself to an instance or two :—

"David obtained his crown by the means of an energetic freebooter, which, nevertheless, does not prevent him from being a very religious man and a king according to God's own heart."—"Discours," p. 15.

"The politics drawn from sacred Scripture by Bossuet are a detestable system." (p. 16.)

"The absolute fixedness of the laws of nature is prominently the principle of science. As to the old Shemitic spirit, it is anti-scientific and anti-philosophic. In the book of Job the search after causes is almost presented as an impiety. In Ecclesiastes science is declared vanity." (p. 17.)

The passage which gave chief offence to the priests of France is the following :—

"An incomparable man,—so great that (although in this chair everything ought to be judged in the light of positive science) I would not contradict those who, struck with the exceptional character of his work, call him God,—effected a reform in Judaism so deep, so special, that, to speak the truth, it was a complete creation." (p. 23.)

That phrase "complete creation" makes me doubt the sincerity of the passage, and I am inclined to think it wholly ironical; for, while denying creation as a fact altogether, he had again and again, in previously published writings, attempted to show that Christianity was the natural product of its age. However, the author, in a vindication of his address published afterwards, describes it thus :—

"A parenthesis was introduced as a respectful attenuation, and to acknowledge that, if anywhere, the divine shows itself in a particular manner it is in Jesus."—"Explications," pp. 20, 21.

Other terms employed in the inaugural address may throw light on these :—

"The professor will do wrong if he gives a course, to deny the divinity of certain facts; he will be within the limits of his duty in speaking of those facts as if he did not think them divine." (p. 11.)

What, then, is the meaning of the "respectful attenuation?" "Jesus is simply an incomparable man, though, as your priests call him God, I, speaking from this chair, will not flatly contradict you." Whether this is truth or sarcasm, it is, we are told, "a respectful attenuation," and such a compliment was little likely to satisfy the sacerdotal authorities. Probably they felt indignant at the pretence of respect, no less than injured by the indirectness of the denial. The manifest tendency of the whole was in favour of unqualified scepticism. The covert intent was descried by the juvenile part of the audience, who were noisy in the expression of their delight, and the import of the testimony thus given was accepted by the professor in the warm and eulogistic terms in which he afterwards conveyed his thanks to the young students:—

"I thank the French youths for the support they granted me on that occasion. The tact and justness of mind which I found before me struck my attention. With a penetration which the most able liberals have not always had, my young auditors saw that a narrow and intolerant dogmatism is the greatest enemy of freedom. Thanks to their intelligent favour, it was then demonstrated that fanaticism will never prevail in France against the scientific spirit; that the enemies of discussion will never draw the public on to an act of intolerance. In this sense, the day was a good day for liberty, and I am proud of having been the occasion of it. (p. 18.)

If fanaticism was checked, I hope the professor felt his share of the rebuke, for I must say that he is hardly free from the charge, when he deals thus stealthily and thus destructively with established opinions and interests, under the shield of a criticism which, to use his own description of it, he believed had "prepared a total revolution in men's ideas as to the past of the human race." ("Explications," p. 14.)

However, he had told the Roman hierarchy that they must abandon their throne. He had taunted them with their having humiliated Galileo. He had presented himself as the successor to their absolute empire. What could he expect? A trial of strength took place, and Renan was superseded.

The only wonder is, that he should ever have desired such a position. What was his assumption of it but the seizure of the citadel of not only the Roman Catholic church, but of Christianity; nay, of revealed religion. And yet such is the habitual dreaminess of mind with which he views religious concerns, that, while having repeatedly denied revelation as a fact, and done his utmost to undermine the religions which make special claims to revelation, after the manner of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, he represents a kind of revelation as the reason which finally determined him to apply for the appointment:—

"My sole counsellor (in my hesitation) was my well-beloved sister, who, a few days after, was to expire at my side. That person whose judgment was

so sure, and so purely governed by moral considerations, told me that I must not give way, whatever the difficulties. . . . On my return to France, I saw a kind of imperative revelation in the advice of a friend who then appeared to me environed by the sacred halo of death."—"Explications," p. 7.

"Revelation!" The advice of a deceased sister, given while she was alive, a revelation! The instance may, however, be of service as showing the laxity in which our critic indulges in the use of religious phraseology.

The ecclesiastical issue of which I have spoken was complicated by political considerations. The moment when Renan entered on his duties was a time of social excitement, in which collegiate youths took pleasure in manifesting dislike toward the existing Government on every opportunity. It might have been expected that an emperor who had published essays which, when collected, filled four octavo volumes, who was actually writing a life of Julius Cæsar, and who was known to aspire to a seat in the Institute, would not be unacceptable to the teachers and representatives of the highest learning. But they could not forget the sanguinary *coup d'état* by which he had made himself master of the state, nor forgive the hostility he had manifested against the highest intellectual ability of the land. The spirit of these instructors was caught by their pupils. Already they had displayed their antipathy by uproarious proceedings against a writer whose sympathies they thought were with the court, and the appearance of Renan in public gave another welcome occasion for exhibiting their ill-will toward the imperial throne. They were actuated by various motives. As a member of the Institute into which the emperor had failed to make his way, Renan must, they said, be his opponent. His own associates reproached him with his journey into the East, as a proof on the contrary that he was an Imperialist. Those who held the former view were ready to applaud him on the ground of his defying the Government. Those who took the latter were not less prepared to salute him with groans as one of its servants. The applauders were joined and supported by such as shared his sceptical tendencies, while the clerical party eagerly lent their support to those who hissed. As admission to the lectures at the College of France is free of charge, and as women are not excluded, a miscellaneous crowd filled the hall; which was, moreover, thickly sprinkled over with young men of the upper classes, who in France are not eager for scientific instruction, and only make their appearance in lecture-rooms when they have reason to expect some striking indication of the tendency of the times. Already, before the professor had taken his seat, a running fire was interchanged between the two parties; on both sides they shouted, whistled, clapped, in wild confusion. At length Renan appeared, accompanied by several colleagues. The whole assembly rose on his entrance, and greeted him with a storm of applause. The noise, penetrating beyond the walls, called forth

an echo from the thousands who stood without. Shaking hands with several friends on the platform, the lecturer took his seat. Before he could utter a word, the uproar began afresh ; the hisses and whistlings of the few were drowned by the plaudits of the many. From the upper benches of the amphitheatre a hand threw the lecturer a few halfpence, which fell on the table. He quietly took them up, and made a sign that he wished to speak. There was a sudden calm. The moment he opened his lips he was interrupted by shouts and cries of diverse import. Nevertheless, he continued to read his lecture, in a voice quivering with emotion. He compared the temporal power of the Pope with the sabre of Mohammed. When he called Jesus Christ "an incomparable man," "This lecture is a revolution," exclaimed one of the audience. The proceedings over, Renan was accompanied to his home by an exultant crowd, which separated only after raising in his honour peals of deafening cheers. The authorities interfered, and he was forbidden to continue his course. Thereupon his name became the watchword of the opposition, the public mind was moved, the police was set in motion, and divers arrests were made. The Government newspapers, and those of the sacerdotal party, strongly condemned the lecturer, and approved his suspension, while the liberal journals were loud in condemning the latter and commending the former. However, the affair did not contain the elements of a popular insurrection. The tumult subsided. Renan lost his professorship, but, marrying the daughter of Henry Scheffer, brother of the great master, Ary Scheffer, his nuptials received the benediction of the Archbishop of Paris himself. The leisure which was thus forced upon him he employed in revising for the press the pages of his "Life of Jesus," by which he was to diffuse a far deeper excitement than had prevailed in the lecture-room through every circle of the civilised world. That work is an embodiment of its writer's mind, and can in no adequate degree be understood or appreciated apart from an acquaintance with his mental and moral physiognomy. In it, no less than in the last volume he has published, entitled "Les Apôtres" (The Apostles), the eye of the critical reader finds the materialism of the extreme German philosophy attired in the gaudy robes of French sentimentalism.*

Renan terminated his lecture by a passage, an extract from which presents concisely, and by way of anticipation, the view of his philosophy, which I shall have to set forth in details supplied in part by his own pen:—

"The future, gentlemen, belongs to Europe, and to Europe alone. Europe will conquer the world, and spread its religion over its surface: that religion which is justice, liberty, respect for man, the belief that there is something divine in the bosom of our race. In all departments of culture, progress for the

* While this is passing through the press his "Life of Paul" is announced.

Indo-Europeans will consist in getting farther and farther from the Shemitic spirit. Our religion will become less and less Jewish ; more and more it will repel all organisation applied to the affairs of the soul. It will become the religion of the heart, the inmost poetry of each individual. In morality, we shall pursue delicacies unknown to the harsh natures of the Old Testament ; we shall become more and more Christian. In politics, we shall reconcile two things which the Shemites were always ignorant of—liberty and a strong government. From poetry, we shall ask a form for that instinct of the infinite which is our delight and our torment, any way our nobleness. From philosophy displacing the scholastic absolutism, we shall acquire vistas into the general system of the universe. In everything we shall aim at refinement of thought, instead of dogmatism, the relative in place of the absolute. Here, in my judgment, lies the future, if the future belongs to progress. Shall we ever arrive at a more certain view of the destiny of man and of his relations with the infinite ? Shall we more clearly know the origin of beings, the nature of consciousness, what is life and what is personality ? Will the world, without returning to credulity, and while persisting in its route of positive philosophy, recover joy, ardour, hope, distant views ? Will life some day be worth having ? and will the man who believes in duty find in duty his reward ? Will this science to which we consecrate our days give back what we sacrifice on its behalf ? I do not know. This, however, is certain, that in searching after truth by the method of science, we shall have at least the consolation of having discovered it, according to rule ; it may be said that we ought to have found it more consolatory ; however, we shall be able to bear to ourselves this testimony, namely, that we have been thoroughly sincere.”—“Discours,” pp. 28, 29.

And a precious testimony that is ; a testimony without which faith is valueless, and hope has no foundation. Yet it cannot be denied, and must not be concealed, that the prospect offered by our philosopher is gloomy and unattractive. After all the promise, vague and shadowy it is true, held out in the beginning of this passage, we are at last left in doubt, if not in darkness, respecting the progressiveness of humanity, the destiny of our race, its relations with the infinite, the origin of beings, the nature of consciousness, of life, of personality. What is worse than this speculative uncertainty is that while the world has lost joy, ardour, hope, and distant views, its recovery of these blessings is problematical. There is something worse still. Life is now not worth having, and may be never worth having ; duty at present misses its reward—will it ever be otherwise ? The answer is, “I do not know.” The same answer is given to all the other questions. That “I do not know” suggests another question :—If philosophy yields so negative a result, is it worth the sacrifices it exacts ? Perhaps not ; but then, if all terminates in blank despair, we shall at least know that the way we have travelled is the right way, and that we have trodden it with our eyes open and with an approving conscience.

Molière’s doctor used to console the friends of his dead patients with the remark that they had died *secundum artem*, “according to the rules of art.” What more could be desired ? What was there to complain of ? Everything had been done that could be done—why mourn ? Why ? Simply that the loved ones were gone, and could not be recalled. So with Renan’s conso-

lation. It is literally worthless. Perhaps it is the bitterest drop in the bitter cup, for this sole certainty does but confirm and ratify all the other uncertainties. Could we but think it possible that we had been on a wrong path, we could indulge a hope that a change of road might lead into "a better country." Any way, the devotees of philosophy have but little, very little, to thank their instructor for. Happy those who, while shunning credulity with as much care as Renan himself, have learnt how to reconcile reason and revelation, religion and science, and, in their mutual services and combined teachings, are able to prefer the absolute to the relative, God to man, the permanent to the perishable, duty to reward, and thereby acquire a culture equally reliable, harmonious, satisfactory, and prolific. I must, I fear, add that such a result is plainly impossible in any system which reverses the great underlying fact of a paternal Deity, originating, pervading, governing the great whole, by preferring the relative to the absolute; in other words, the creature to the Creator.

As the aim I have in view in this outline of the life and literary products of Ernest Renan is to prepare the way for what is to follow, by furnishing a general sketch of both, I can hardly consider my task completed if I wholly omit one side of his character which is rather national than individual, and which, in consequence, a national pen can describe more justly than my own. I here invoke the aid of Scherer (*ut supra* pp. 542-5):—

"It is not the excess of criticism that we ought to reproach our writer with, it is rather what I shall call his *dilettantism* (literary affectation); and here I lay my finger on an undoubted fault in M. Renan. The historian seeks only one thing, truth in facts. Herein lies his task as well as his function. You have no right to blame the care he employs to separate the true from the false, since such is the condition of his work. You have no right to be vexed with him if he shows himself reserved in the appreciation of things; as an historian he is bound only to report. But M. Renan takes, perhaps, too much pleasure in the position given him by science above the ignorance and the passions of the majority of men. He has the haughtiness of an aristocrat, I had almost said the refinements of a dandy. He not only reserves his judgment because he cannot determine it, but because 'delicacy of mind consists in abstaining from conclusions.' He does not doubt only because certainty fails him, but because doubt separates him from the vulgar, and seems to him high breeding and lofty manners. It has been said that vengeance is the pleasure of the immortal gods; he seems to think that disdain is the most precious attribute of the student. He is too exclusively, too naively, the man of letters. The great, the good, the beautiful have somehow with him no value but their picturesque value, and his love of truth threatens to degenerate into pure curiosity. He does not hate the saints, provided they have not a vulgar air. He does not fear the monastic life; has it not had its poetry and its grandeur? He asks of religion only one thing, namely, its remaining united with delicacy of soul and culture of mind. Men speak of regenerating Rome. M. Renan cannot think of a regenerated Rome without terror; rather than allow modern commonplace to invade those grand ruins, he would that monks should be paid in order to keep up pauperism and wretchedness there. It is not possible to mistake it; this is puerility or affectation. By a natural effect of the *dilettantism* that I lay to his charge, M. Renan also resigns himself too easily to the position of exercising no action in the world. Separating without regret

from the rest of human kind, the ideal he caresses is that of the German philologist shut up in his study, as of old the monk in his cell, and beholding events coming to pass without his taking part therein. 'A spectator of the universe,' he says, 'knows that the world belongs to him only as a subject of study; and even if he could reform it, perhaps he would find it so curious as it is, that he would not have courage for the task.' Here the writer falls into affectation, and consequently into the false. He did not see that science can be independent without becoming indifferent. Truth, as A. Von Humboldt remarks, has for its object solely itself, but it has value only in view of the human race. Let us be certain of it, the moral element—I use the word in its widest sense—is as indispensable in mental affairs as in those of active life. It is the salt which prevents knowledge from becoming corrupt. You gain nothing by ever wishing to be either more or less than a man.

"This slight vein of affectation which I indicate in the writings of our author appears sometimes in an opposite manner. You have just seen him almost a cynic in the expression of his disdain for the vulgar and the interests of society;—who would believe it? we find him suddenly transformed into the champion of religion! He thinks he is serving it. In all his books he has intended to re-animate it. He would not die happy if his influence had been limited to historical studies. His great passion is for the ideal, for duty, for the weal of souls. Well and good; but M. Renan, in taking in hand the care of souls, runs a risk of falling into another extreme. Does he not offer us what no one asks him for? He is an historian, let him narrate. He is a critic, let him hunt after facts with that mixture of rigour and passion which makes the great critic. He is a man of science, let him consecrate his efforts to the quest of the true, assured that the true will always be found in company with the good, the beautiful, the divine; or rather that the true is the very substance of those things, and makes but one with them. This is what is expected from him. A life devoted to such a work will be sufficiently busy and sufficiently noble. It will in its way have served the human race; but science gains nothing by seeking an object beyond its own sphere, be that object religion or morals, any more than by being satisfied with amusing men's minds. It has its proper object, reality, truth, and it cannot set another before its eyes without incurring the risk of making it unnatural."

I have thus conducted the reader through so much of "The Life and Writings of Renan" as may enable him to form some idea of the man. Manifestly we have here to do with an intellectual and moral enigma. A critical sphinx is before us, who, while criticising all the world, defies the ordinary laws of criticism. We are then prepared to miss consistency in the object of our studies. One thing, however, we are assured, by what has gone before, we shall find, namely, a severe, if not an unjust, judgment of the character of the Lord Jesus. And already intimations have appeared sufficient to make it doubtful whether Renan has the intellectual, moral, and religious qualifications requisite to justify his assuming the high and sacred functions of a biographer of Jesus.

This appears to me a not unsuitable place for a concise and colourless outline of the "Life of Jesus," as represented by our critic.

The public life of Jesus divides itself into three periods. The first comprises the short space of time when he found the Heavenly Father under the azure skies of Galilee, in the scenery around Nazareth, and on the summit of that mountain on the

lower part of whose flanks spreads the small town of that name. There he opens his career by proclaiming the Father which is in heaven, and mutual brotherly love among men. A fine season was this. Then, for a short time, God dwelt among men. The second period dates from the moment when Jesus became acquainted with John the Baptist, and underwent the influence of that stern reformer. Then, adding to the moral precepts of the Kingdom of God the Messianic beliefs of his nation and age, he begins to feel and manifest an exaggerated opinion of himself. But his manner still retains something mild and genial. Then a Galilean idyl arises around him, of which he is the central figure. Numbers of the childlike Galileans, of whom the most important were women and children, joyously follow his steps in festive choirs, so that the new religion is in many respects the work of those loving and credulous natures. A totally different aspect is taken by his position when he transfers his movements from Galilee into Judea and Jerusalem. In this third period he becomes increasingly a rough revolutionist, who means to found the Kingdom of Heaven on the ruins of the present, and takes the angels of God into his service in order to judge and rule the world. His zeal passes into fanaticism, and his fanaticism becomes dark and ambitious. He claims to be the Son of God in the dogmatical sense of the term, and makes belief in himself the fundamental law of his kingdom. No longer over scrupulous as to his means of success, he performs miracles at the importunity of disciples, and to save his cause from defeat and ruin. From the consequent complexity he is, however, relieved by death. Though he dies on the cross, he ever lives in the trusting hearts of his disciples, through whose etherealising veneration he receives the honours of divinity.

Belief in this exposition of the forces out of which Christianity arose, with all its products during eighteen hundred years, is a demand on human nature which it is little likely to yield, which any philosophy deserving the name would indignantly reject, and which even Renan himself could never have honoured had he not held that man's nature is of such a kind as to believe and follow a lie rather than any pure form of truth whatever. The argument here adduced is as old as Origen. Being an illustration of the intrinsic moral and spiritual power of Christianity, it will retain its force after heaven and earth shall have passed away, finding in every successive phase of society the new bottles for the new wine. The learned Father just mentioned, commenting on Psalm xlv., 2,

Thou fairest of the sons of Adam,
Grace is poured on to thy lips.

And applying the reference to Christ, declares :—

“Here is a proof of the grace that was poured on his lips—namely, that within a brief period, for he taught but a year and some months, the entire globe was filled with his doctrine, faith, and piety.”—“*De Principiis*,” iv., 5.

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITINGS OF
ERNEST RENAN.

- "*Histoire Générale et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitiques.*" (General History and Comparative System of the Shemitic Languages.) 1845. 2nd edition, 1858. 4th edition, 2 vols., 8vo.
- "*La Liberté de Penser.*" (The Free Thinker.) 1848-50.
- "*Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse.*" (Studies in Religious History.) 1857. 7th edition, 1864, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*Essais de Morale et de Critique.*" (Moral and Critical Essays.) 1859. 3rd edition, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*Le Livre de Job, traduit de l'Hébreu.*" (The Book of Job, translated from the Hebrew.) 1859. 3rd edition, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*La Revue des Deux Mondes.*" (The Review of the Two Hemispheres.) 15th January, 1860.
- "*Le Cantique des Cantiques, traduit de l'Hébreu.*" (The Song of Songs, translated from the Hebrew.) 1860. 2nd edition, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*De l'Origine du Langage.*" (On the Origin of Language.) 1858. 4th edition, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*Averroes et l'Averroïsme.*" (Averroes and Averroism.) 1861. 2nd edition, 1 vol., 8vo.
- "*De la Part des Peuples Sémitiques dans l'Histoire de la Civilisation; Discours d'Overture.*" (On the Part of the Shemitic Races in the History of Civilisation; Inaugural Discourse.) 6th edition, 1864.
- "*La Chaire d'Hébreu au Collège de France; Explications à mes Collègues.*" (The Hebrew Chair in the College of France; Explanations to my Colleagues.) 4th edition, 1862.
- "*Histoire des Origines du Christianisme.*" (History of the Originals of Christianity.)—*Livre Premier: "La Vie de Jésus."* (Book the First: The Life of Jesus.) 1st edition, 1863. 13th edition, 1867. The fifth popular edition, 1864. *Livre Second: "Les Apôtres."* (Second Book: The Apostles.) 1866. *Livre Troisième: "Paul."* (Third Book: Paul.) 1868.

The italicised French words are the words by which the several references are made in the text.

The editions given are those of my own copies. "The Life of Jesus" remained unaltered through twelve editions. The last edition (13th), which is the first edition that has undergone revision, is increased in bulk more than improved in substance. The principal change, besides a Preface, is in an Appendix, in which the author aims to justify the use which he makes of the Fourth Gospel. Here his view of that book is, on the whole, more favourable. At the end of the volume the student is furnished with a tabular view of the paging in the 13th edition as compared with that of the previous ones. In general, he will find any passage in the 13th edition if he adds three or four pages to the page of earlier editions.

CHAPTER II.

RENAN'S SPIRIT, AS CONTRASTED WITH THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, DISQUALIFIES THE FORMER FOR WRITING A LIFE OF THE LATTER.

WE have been studying a not ignoble life in some of its principal features. Renan's literary career, considered as such, does him the highest credit. Our object has been to prepare ourselves for ascertaining whether or not he possesses the qualifications requisite in an historian of Christ. Viewed in regard to this office, many things already set forth can, in impartial eyes, have only a negative aspect. I do not wish to be more condemnatory than facts compel, and therefore I will not summarise the points. Rather, I will continue to report favourable traits when I come upon them.

The subject, however, which he has chosen of his own accord, is one of extreme difficulty. The least incompetent will shrink from it the soonest. Who has not felt that, after all, the only possible life of Christ is that which we possess in the Gospels? But Renan is bold here. He does not undertake a sketch or an outline, nor even a life of Christ, but "The Life of Jesus." Not content, like Dr. Schenkel, with giving "A Portrait of Christ," nor restricting himself to Christ's public career, he apprehends his theme in its widest relations, and offers to the public "*The Life of Jesus*" in the most unqualified manner. Yet I am compelled, by my study of the production, to apply (*mutatis mutandis*) to Renan himself words which he uses of Strauss:—

"Strauss (Renan), who is represented in France as a sort of antichrist, is really a theologian; let us add, at the risk of appearing to seek for a paradox, that the theologian is a disciple of Hegel. His 'Life of Jesus' is, at the bottom, only the philosophy of the head of the contemporary German school applied to the evangelical narratives; the Christology of the theologian is only the symbolical translation of the abstract theories of the philosopher."—*"Études,"* p. 157.

Before we proceed further in describing the spirit of Renan, we ask, what is the spirit of Christ? I cannot attempt to describe what I so imperfectly feel. Nor need I make the attempt. The true image is found in the Christian heart and experience. To that let the appeal be made. And yet Scripture may be called in to aid. One passage, which, describing the reality on its own authority, covers the entire ground over which it spreads, may be cited here, others will occur hereafter:—

"The spirit of Jehovah is upon me, because he hath anointed me to

announce good tidings to 'the poor in spirit;' he hath sent me to proclaim remission to the captives (of sin), the recovering of sight to the (spiritually) blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year (the year of moral and spiritual jubilee) of Jehovah."—Luke iv., 18.

The original Hebrew, whence this is cited, adds—"and the day of vengeance of our God." (Isaiah lxi., 2.) This Jesus omits, thus showing that his Good News was, in essence, an offer of divine mercy and succour—to whom? to all; but chiefly to the morally lost, for "the Son of Man came not only to save but to seek the lost" (Luke xix., 10), as he himself states fully, and illustrates impressively, in his inimitable parables of the Prodigal Son, the Lost Piece of Silver, the Stray Sheep, and the Good Samaritan. Here, and in his laying down his life for the world while executing his great commission, is seen the spirit of Christ. If this spirit is to become universal it must be on the road on which Jesus trod, and not in any philosophy whatever, which, as being "made by art and man's device," can neither breathe the spirit nor accomplish the will of the one universal Father.

It is manifest that, as no one but a poet can judge a poet, and no one but a painter can judge a painter, so only religious men can appreciate and describe a religion. If so, then the nearer you stand in principles to the principles of the religion you study the better will you be able to set it forth, if only because you will have in your own life correspondent thoughts and sympathies with the religion or the religionist that you are concerned to exhibit. This necessity is in general admitted by Renan :—

"Religion being the deepest expression of human consciousness at a given epoch, if you would well understand the religious system of an age, you must live its life in a profundity of which the most penetrating historian is scarcely capable."—"Averroes," p. 162.

Can it then be said that Renan lives the Christian life as embodied in Christ? He does not even make the pretension; and toward the Christianity of the New Testament he shows in his writings little except antipathy. Let us, however, own any good we find. What ensues is morally as well as intellectually superior :—"The true has its rights as well as the good, and we gain nothing by those timid falsehoods which deceive no one, and which end only in hypocrisy." ("Essais," Pref., p. iii.)

Yes, "the true has its rights," but one of those rights is the utterance of your own truth in your own vocabulary, and not in the vocabulary of the religion whose fundamental principles you distort and assail. Certainly, nothing is to be gained by timid falsehoods; but who is chargeable with such except those who are not bold enough to expound their philosophy in its own appropriate terms?

The ideal of self-devoted thought, too, Renan has well described, and all pure ideals, well described, are benefits conferred on man :—

"When Descartes, shut up in his Dutch closet, as much alone, to cite himself, in the bosom of a great city as in the midst of a forest of walking trees, meditated on the basis of all knowledge and the laws of the universe; when the ascetic of modern philosophy, when Spinoza in his poor corner peered into the eternal world while polishing spectacle glasses; when the founder of German philosophy, with his eyes fixed for forty years on the old tower of the Castle of Königsburg, drew up the most profound analysis of the wheel-work of the human mind that has ever been attempted; when Leibnitz himself, whose life, however, was much more mixed with action, brooded over his monads, the world no longer existed for them. Like pure spirits, standing on the outside of the interests, the passions, the events of their times, they never fancied that there was a society of men, or at least they speculated as if there were nothing of the kind. You might have said to those great men: 'Take care, you will displease all parties, you will embarrass your friends, you will alarm the weak, you will mislead the ill-disposed.' You would have received for answer solely a smile; perhaps they would have made no sign; but certainly their proud spirit would not have been turned aside one step by considerations foreign to the love of truth, the only love they had."—"Essais," p. 68.

Would that we could honestly recognise that elevation of mind in Renan. Those "pure spirits" are scarcely his models, at least if his writings are an image of himself. Nevertheless, he claims entire freedom from all the passions and strifes of dogmatism and controversy:—

"In general, I have forbidden myself to state what I think on the problems which I am led to treat of, or at least I have done so as soberly as possible, aiming only to represent exactly the individuality of characters and the physiognomy of schools. Schools are in philosophy what parties are in politics; the personal system of the historian who recounts the struggles of schools and parties serves often only to make his judgment false, and to spoil the effect of his picture. The critical judgment excludes the dogmatical judgment. Who knows if the perfection of intellect does not consist in abstaining from conclusions? This, let it be observed, is neither indifference nor scepticism; it is criticism."—"Averroes," Pref. x.

"I protest, once for all, against the false interpretation which would be put on my works if they were taken to be polemical. Regarded as such, they would greatly lack skill. Polemics require strategy, to which I am a stranger; you must select the weak side of your adversaries, and keep to it; you must avoid all concession. Such is not my method. The fundamental question on which religious discussion turns—that is, the question of revelation and of the supernatural—I *never touch* (!!); not that the question is not settled on my part with an entire certitude, but because the discussion of such a question is not scientific, or, to speak more correctly, because independent science supposes it determined anteriorly. Some passages in the article entitled 'The Critical Historians of Jesus' form exceptions to what I here say, because that article was composed at an epoch when my manner of handling questions of religious history was not fixed as it is at present."—(1857). "Etudes," Pref. pp. x. xi.

That the moral and literary ideals here set forth are faithfully observed and honoured will scarcely be asserted by any impartial student of his "Life and Writings." The reverse is the fact. Nothing can be more dogmatic, nothing more polemical, than his manner of treating, for instance, the supernatural. His hostility on this point rises to a passion. Nor are his words uttered to critical coteries; they are meant for the reading public in general,

they are addressed to the people. What else can be said of his newspaper articles? his Review essays? his people's edition of his "Life of Jesus?" With one or two exceptions, his writings have appeared in anything but a systematic form, such as to restrict them in the main to scholars. The image which his books and his life calls up is not that of a secluded philosopher, buried in revolving the deep problems of thought, simply for the love of the study, or with a view to the college lecture-room or the narrow circle of learning in the world, but rather of a literary man of deep and varied acquirements, who spends his energies and lavishes his knowledge on compositions designed for immediate effect on the great masses of the reading public; the effect being, not so much to quicken thought, to discipline intellect, to renew the higher life, and reform society, as to accomplish, especially in the church, an iconoclastic demolition, without substituting anything better or more reliable than his own peculiar form of philosophy. We do not blame his zeal. Every earnest man must seek the public ear, and no one has sought it more than Renan. What we regret is the inconsistency here observable between his conduct and his professions. What inconceivable ignorance is there in the declarations we have just read, and is he fit to paint others who knows so little of himself? Of all writers, Renan is the least consistent and reliable. On one page you read one thing, on the next another, and again on the next another. His hues are as many as those of the chameleon. So variable and fickle is his tone, that he is ever a slave to the impulse of the moment. He is indeed a successful word painter. He draws scenes that live and glow, but his ease of utterance is his "rock of offence." Painting everything by turns, he paints nothing permanently, if only because one portrait and one landscape darkens, eclipses, or confuses another.

In prosecuting his enterprise, he is specially studious of the proprieties and graces of utterance. His critics, with one voice, pronounce his style admirable, and the style which French critics commend must possess superior qualities. Yet one quality, one of the highest value, he has in only a restricted degree. Passages already adduced show that he lacks simplicity; nor does the defect lie merely in the diction. It is often his thought that is complicated, entangled, mazy, and obscure. What a contrast, even in point of literary beauty, between the passages I quote from his pen and such as those that fell from the lips of Jesus! He would almost seem to intend an apology for his own shortcomings in the following:—

"It cannot be denied that solicitude for your style entails certain injuries to your thought. To write well in French is a singularly complicated operation, a perpetual compromise, in which taste and originality, scientific exactness, and purity of expression, draw your mind in opposite directions. A good writer is obliged to say scarcely more than half of what he thinks, and if, in addition,

he is conscientious, he is forced to be ceaselessly on his guard lest he be drawn by the necessities of diction to utter many things he does not believe. Eloquence, moreover, has imperious exigencies. All doctrines do not equally allow of eloquent utterance. Yet beauty is one of the signs of truth ; but doubtless Descartes would have been much surprised had he heard some one say that the truest philosophy is that which can be expressed in the finest phrases, and that the oratorical dress of which a doctrine is susceptible may pass for an argument in its favour."—" *Essais*," p. 72.

Without now stopping to take certain exceptions, we grant that Renan has a taste for the good and true as he has a taste for the beautiful. So far as such a taste qualifies a writer to portray Jesus, so far Renan is not devoid of aptitude. But what if that taste is overruled by a philosophical dogma which disallows supreme excellence in the individual ? Then it furnishes no adequate sympathy, since its sympathy breaks down at the very point where Jesus begins to rise above the morally great ones of our race. And yet it is the transcendent qualities of Jesus that constitute his character, assign him his position, determine his work, and characterise his influence in the world. Into those qualities Renan cannot enter. With them, in consequence, he has no sympathy. How, then, can he appreciate and describe Christ, blind and deaf as he is to his essential elements ?

One passage in his writings seems, indeed, to prefer a claim on this point. Renan was a Christian once, and hence still retains a Christian savour :—

"It is well not to dream always, like India, but to have dreamed in your infancy ; there remains, hence, a perfume, and as it were, a tradition, of poetry which gratifies the age when you imagine no longer."—" *Etudes*," p. 200.

This tradition of poetry does survive in his nature. It is traceable in his phraseology. He still talks the religion he has ceased to own and feel. All the leading terms of Christianity are to be found in his pages. God, Christ, the soul, immortality, faith, &c., occur repeatedly, so as to leave on the general reader an impression that he is perusing the productions of a truly Christian man. These, however, are the mere shadows of the realities for which they commonly stand.

The fact has already appeared. Should the sequel confirm my present allegations, I must here recognise a disqualification. How can one who thus deviates from the ordinary sense of words judge Christ, who of all historical characters is most single at once in his ideas and in his expressions ? I transcribe a maxim, which, finding observance in the simple explicitness and thorough outspokenness of his whole career, redounds to his own credit, while it condemns doubleness of every kind :—

"The light of the body is the eye ; therefore when thine eye is single thy whole body is full of light ; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore lest the light that is in thee be darkness."—*Luke xi.*, 34.

I know not the motive by which Renan is actuated in this practice—a practice which appears in fullest form in his “Life of Jesus” and his “Apostles”—but I do know that it was practised in former times on purpose to appear superficially different from what certain writers really were. The cloak, however, had then some excuse, for it was put on in order to escape the capital penalties of free thought. Nay, so far of old did free-thinkers go, that, while uttering the boldest heresies, they sheltered themselves by subjoining in terms employed by Vanini:—

“*Ceterum Sacrosanctae Romanae ecclesiae me subijcio.*”

“However, I subject what I have said to the authority of the holy Church of Rome.”

Whether or not this practice is one of the still remaining *dreams* of Renan’s sacerdotal education, I cannot but remember that something of the kind is expressly forbidden by Christ when he says:—

“Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy; for there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, neither hidden that shall not be made known. What I tell you in darkness that speak ye in the light, and what ye hear in the ear that proclaim ye on the housetops.”—Matt. x.; Luke xii.

Whatever extenuation may be pleaded in regard to by-gone states of society, none can be admitted now when free-thinking of the boldest kind prevails, not without a certain kind of popularity. Any way, Jesus has here too indicated the proper spirit in adding:—“Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” (Matt. x., 28.)

Renan has just declared that if you would well understand the religious system of an age you must live its life, and that “in a profundity of which the most penetrating historian is scarcely capable.” Admitting the remark, we have found its application condemnatory of its author. We now come to an important modification, similar to one previously stated, in his own words:—

“If you would write the history of a religion, you must no longer believe in it, but equally you must have believed in it; you can well understand only the worship which first called out in you your aspiration toward the ideal. Who can be just toward Catholicism that has not been cradled in that admirable legend—has not found the earliest sensations of his religious life in the vaulted roofs of its temples, in ~~the~~ symbols of its worship?”—“*Etudes*,” p. 7.

This is a strange utterance. What is its import? Know you have been deceived; break your ideal into fragments; “no longer believe in” your idol; then you are qualified to describe—what? its real qualities? They are deceptions. Your past conception of them? That was false. Your present conception? Then you can tell only of “that admirable legend” which “first called out in you your aspiration toward the ideal.” The legendary and

the ideal touch religion only on the surface at the most ; and a whole layer, be it as thick as you will, of such " vaulted roofs " and " symbols of worship " is not worth the smallest particle of sterling truth. The aspiration which answers to the call of legend may please the fancy, but cannot nourish the soul nor invigorate the character. If not, it is totally unable to qualify you for writing the history of the religion of Jesus, which, so far as it is his, may indeed partake of the ideal, but is certainly free from legend. Had it been averred that the worst condition in which an historian of a religion could be, for describing it truly, was to have at once believed and disbelieved it, the statement would have been nearer to truth. An illustration is at hand in the " perfume " of the sanctuary, still retained by our author. No longer to him " a sweet-smelling odour," it leads him to borrow its imagery, which still retains its fragrance in the nostrils of others. But what is this, except to mean one thing and say another ? Surely a poor qualification for describing the religion of him who, in the crisis of his earthly fate, said :—

" To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."—John xviii., 37.

History has instruction to give on this point. The Emperor Julian exactly realises the supposition. Like Renan, he received an ecclesiastical training ; and, believing once, he came to disbelieve. Did the fact qualify him for appreciating Christianity ? " The earliest sensations of his religious life " he had found in the Catholicism of his day. Was he, therefore, just toward it ? He was equally unjust and envenomed. Deceived, as he judged, he, when undeceived, hated his deceiver, and did his utmost to destroy Christianity root and branch, and to set up in its place a Paganism which was effete and rotten at the heart. This was the natural result. I should scarcely err if I declared the result inevitable ; and I am not sure that Renan's hostility to Christianity is not what he himself has described as the deadly hostility of the disabused priest. That he may have thought himself at liberty to take reprisals for the pressures he suffered in childhood and youth from sacerdotal hands, is made probable by these his words :—

" Blasphemy is understood, and almost excused, in periods when, philosophy not being free, the thinker takes his revenge on the hindrances he is subject to by an ironical respect and by secret anger."—" Etudes," p. 186.

But does this plea betray the spirit of Jesus or the spirit of the Jesuit ? " Ironical respect " is a euphemism for a falsity, and " secret anger " looks very like revenge. How incomparably superior the precept of Christ :—

" Ye have heard it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,

and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven : for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."—Matt. v., 43.

We read much in Renan's writings of the ideal. He worships the ideal. What his ideal involves we shall more and more see as we proceed. It suffices here to remark that the words of Christ just cited present the true ideal—a moral ideal, which has its corresponding reality in God, who is the merciful Father of sinful men. This, the Christian ideal, cannot be understood, much less observed and honoured, by one who tacitly commends "ironical respect" and "secret anger," indulged in out of "revenge."

I cannot, however, suppress the fear that ironical respect, if not secret revenge, is intended by Renan when, obviously alluding to our Saviour's blessing on the persecuted, he declares :—

"He who, after the manner of Caiaphas, says, 'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not,' is certainly a detestable politician ; and yet, sad to say, he may still be an honourable man. More than once history has justified the persecuted and the persecutors ; and doubtless, in the everlasting life, the persecuted will thank their persecutors for having procured for them, by suffering, the seal of perfection."—"Etudes," p. 195.

If, however, this passage represents Renan's thought, I cannot describe its character better than by saying that he may consider it "honourable" philosophy, but it is certainly "detestable" morality. What else is the implication that a "detestable politician" may be an "honourable man"? What else the averment that history justifies persecution? Something worse is the extravagance that hereafter—that is, in a state of perfect justice and universal adjustment—the persecuted will own that they owe their perfection to their persecutors, and thank them for their breach of law, human and divine.

Moreover, the passage presents an instance of his linguistic twofoldness. The only "everlasting life" which Renan acknowledges is the perpetuation of the human species. Individuals perish ; the race survives, and remains indefinitely. "The seal of perfection" is a relic of the writer's dead Catholicism, and the implied future recompense is a rhetorical flight.

These are sorry qualifications in an historian of a religion whose spirit is described by one who could truly declare :—

"We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Cor. iv., 2.

The immorality, here couched in particular instances, appears with bold front as a general principle in what follows :—

"I know that several passages of the translation of the Canticles will appear shocking to those who have known the 'Song of Songs' only under the mystical veil (of piety) which the religious sense of centuries has thrown over

it. These persons are they whose habits of thought it gives one pain to disturb. It is never without fear that one lays hands on those sacred texts which have founded or sustained the hopes of eternity ; or, in the name of critical science, rectifies those venerable blunders which have consoled our race, have aided it to traverse so many arid deserts, and enabled it to acquire truths far superior to those of philosophy. It is better that the world should have expected the Messiah, than correctly understood a passage in Isaiah where it believed he was announced ; it is better that it has believed in the Resurrection than rightly interpreted and understood an obscure passage in the Book of Job, on the faith of which it has affirmed its future deliverance. Where should we be if the contemporaries of Christ and the founders of Christianity had been as good philologists as Gesenius ? Faith in the Resurrection and faith in the Messiah have accomplished greater things than the exact science of the grammarian. But it is the grandeur of the modern spirit not to sacrifice the legitimate wants of human nature the one to the other. Our hopes do not any longer depend on the right or the wrong explanation of a text. Moreover, each one imposes his faith on the texts much more than receives it therefrom. Those who need the authority of Job in order to believe in the future, will not believe the Hebraist who shall oppose to them his doubts and his objections ; without troubling themselves about a various reading, they will boldly declare with the race at large, '*I know that my Redeemer liveth.*' (Job xix.) In the same way the Song of Songs, dear to so many pious souls, will subsist in spite of my demonstrations. As an antique statue which the piety of the middle ages attired as a Madonna, it will preserve its respect even when the archæologist shall have proved its profane origin. For myself, my object has not been to remove the image, now become sacred from veneration, but to strip a monument of its coverings in order to show it to the amateurs of art in its chaste nudity."—"Le Cantique," Pref. pp. xii.-xiv.

The substance of this extraordinary passage may be conveyed in these propositions :—

- "Illusion is more useful than reality ;
- "The false is better than the true ;
- "The end justifies the means."

What an idea of Providence has he who holds that our race has been consoled by "venerable blunders ;" which venerable blunders are for the nonce pronounced "truths far superior to those of philosophy." But I abstain from further comment ; the subject is too painful, and the tenor of the passage is too manifest.

The concluding words intimate that truth and reality are for the duly prepared few. The same is openly declared in what follows :—

"Let us who possess the love of truth and unquenchable curiosity labour for the small number of those who go forwards in the front of human thought."—"Etudes," p. xiii.

This distinction pervades Renan's writings. Truth is for the philosophic minority ; the ignorant multitude are given up, and may be given over to their illusions and superstitions. Nay more, the bulk create the idols they worship. Humanity is self-deluded and self-adored, though in truth there is as little in the past as in the present worthy adoration, except it be poetic ideals which have no corresponding realities :—

"It may be asserted that if we saw the origin of the great things of the past

as near as the wretched agitations of the present, all charm would vanish, and there would no longer remain anything to worship ; but it is not in this lower region of the fluctuations and failures of the individual that we must seek the eternal beauty. Things are beautiful only by that which the human race sees in them, by the sentiments it connects with them, by the symbols it draws from them. It is the race which creates all those absolutes, which never exist in reality. Reality is complex, made up of evil as well as good, at once admirable and open to criticism, worthy of love and also hate ; while, on the contrary, what obtains the homage of humanity is simple, spotless, all admirable. Criticism exclusively pre-occupied with truth, moreover at ease as to consequences, since it knows that the results of its researches do not penetrate into the regions where illusions are necessary, has for its mission to repair the blunders about which humanity is little concerned. It does not exaggerate the importance of this mission. What does it, in effect, matter that humanity in its admiration commits mistakes, that it makes the men whom it adopts more pure and more beautiful than they were in reality ? Its homage, addressed to the beauty which it supposes in them, and which it has put in them, is not on that account the less meritorious. In the historical point of view, the philosopher alone has the right to admire ; but, morally, the ideal belongs to all. Sentiments have value independently of the reality of the object which excites them, and it may be doubted whether humanity will ever possess the scruples of the learned, who will admire only on solid grounds."—"Etudes," p. 270.

A strange conglomeration of words, surely ! The meaning ? I am not sure that it has any ; and as far as I can descry a meaning, it is not a consistent one, and stands for nothing real in man, Providence, God. However, one thing it does certainly : it makes a broad distinction between critics and the herd ; and it allows the former to destroy, because the latter is ignorant and self-deceived.

Can anything be more antagonistic to the intense realism, the all-embracing universalism, yet the tender and considerate individualism, as of the Bible generally, so of the religion of Jesus in particular ? I subjoin, by way of illustration, two Scriptural passages :—

"Consider the ravens : they neither sow nor reap ; which have neither storehouse nor barn ; yet God feedeth them : how much more are ye better than the fowls ? Consider the lilies how they grew : they toil not, they spin not ; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith ?"—Luke xii., 22 seq.

"A certain man made a great supper, and invited many ; and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were invited, Come ; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The servant came and showed his master these things. Then the master said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Sir, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the master said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."—Luke xiv., 16 seq.

Is he who wrote the philosophic phantasms of the former passage qualified to apprehend and report the spirit and power of him who spake the simply beautiful, yet most momentous words just cited

from the New Testament? What else does the critic make society and the universe but a succession of blind and senseless phantasmagoria? whereas both, in the view of Christ, are apartments in the well-conducted, happy, and ever-brightening home of the universal Parent; who, while He invites the few, makes due provision and earnest quest for the many.

There is, on the part of Renan, one disqualification which, of itself, suffices to set him aside when the task is a portrayal of the life of Christ: he is in possession of no adequate material:—

“Scarcely is it necessary to say that with such documents (the four Gospels), if you are to give only what cannot be questioned, you must restrict yourself to the general outlines.”—“*Vie de Jésus*,” Introd. p. xlvii.

“Were we to extract from the four Evangelists all the reality they contain, we should scarcely obtain one page of the history of Jesus.”—“*La Liberté*,” 15th April, 1850.

Neither “general outlines,” nor one page of the history of Jesus, is, or can be made into, “The History of Jesus.” Yet this is all; whatever else the philosopher may give must be divinations, conjectures, or inventions. Abstain, then, from so hopeless a labour.

You reply, “On other occasions I acknowledge the existence of less scanty materials;” but if so, then in the degree in which this is true you are convicted of contradiction. In truth, you often contradict yourself. An exhibition of your contradictions would occupy pages, and serve to make your readers doubt what your real meaning often is. The perplexity, however distressing to them, is a result which you rather seek than avoid; for, as we have seen, you studiously shun definite conclusions as one of the highest merits of philosophy. Nay, so little do you pursue truth in the love of it, that you prefer in others the reverse of what you teach, and so are possessed of that spirit of indifference which undermines human nature more than even dogmatism.

“Were I the head of a school, I should be so perverse as to like only those of my disciples who dissented from my teachings.”—“*La Revue*,” p. 370.

This certainly is negativism run wild. Renan quarrels only with such as agree with him. He teaches, not to convince, but to repel. How, then, can he enter into the consciousness of him who said, “Believe in God, believe also in me;” “I am the way, the truth, and the life”? If Christ is right, his critic is wrong; not superficially and partially, but fundamentally and thoroughly. Between the two there lacks a common ground, and, in consequence, the one can in no way understand the other. Indeed, he expressly recommends concealment:—

“The skill of the writer consists in having a philosophy and hiding it; the public ought to see the rivers which come forth from paradise, but not the sources whence they spring; it may hear the sound, but not see the instrument by which it is produced. True science does not utter itself at one effort; it is always relative, always incomplete, always capable of improvement. A

science of sciences, one which would make the others unnecessary, would be the tomb of the human mind, and have the same consequences as a revelation ; in giving us the absolute dogma, it would cut short all mental activity, all research."—"La Revue," p. 373.

As if activity were nutriment. The mind, no less than the body, requires food as well as exercise. The extravagance uttered in the text would surely have been avoided had its author conceived of religious truth as moral and spiritual, rather than intellectual. Mere speculation lets men die of emptiness, unless they are supported by moral verities involved in the relationship held by God toward man. And, verily, since the bulk of men have neither time nor talent for metaphysical research, they cannot but pine and perish if no other hand than science supply the needful aliment. Lamentable condition this in which our race is left by the philosophers, who, denying them religious nutriment, have no other to offer in its place. How can one so destitute and impotent hope to set forth the life and explain the deeds of him who at once fed the body, healed the mind, and revived the forces of ignorant, sick, sinful, and perishing men ?

The disqualification becomes absolute when Renan espouses a philosophy half of light, half of darkness : this to be shown, that to be hidden ; this for the vulgar eye, that for the initiated alone : especially as what is hidden is not the branch, but the root. If principles are to be kept in the dark, and only results exposed in public, then we have the jugglery of the ancient temples restored, and the worst tricks of Romanism may be played off in the liquefaction of blood and the winking of Madonnas, under the name of positive philosophy.

We have now not asserted but established the existence of the incompatibility of the spirit of Renan and the spirit of Jesus, and are entitled to say that never was a more hopeless task attempted than when he took his pen in hand to describe the Light, Life, and Saviour of the world. In prosecuting the subject, I have attempted to explain a literary phenomenon of the most extraordinary kind, showing how it was possible for one so deeply read, so highly and variously cultured, and so professedly religious, to produce and publish the fantastic and offensive parody which its author entitles "The Life of Jesus." Those who have entered into the previous remarks will cease to wonder at the perversion. I myself should regret its appearance, did I not desire the freest scrutiny and the fullest liberty on religious as on all other subjects. Nor do I wish to deny that thousands have had their minds turned to the subject by the volume who, but for its attractions, often meretricious, would have remained stolidly indifferent or ignorantly hostile to Christianity. Of these, many, I hope, have found in even Renan's picture some natural feature or two of "the Son of man," and so, being led to suspect that there is here a great moral reality, may be borne forwards in study, reflection, and

prayer, until they find the Son of God, and be introduced by him into the true and blessed life.

The position, thus made firm and steadfast, of Renan's incapacity to compose a life of the Christ of the New Testament, will receive illustrations in the remainder of the volume. But I contemplate a deeper and more important result. Views, of which Renan's may be considered the type, widely spread on the Continent, are rapidly making their way into the British dominions. A compound of Comteism and Hegelianism, they are fatal to Christianity. Works in which they are contained are eagerly read in the more liberal circles of British Christianity. Their influence I desire to counteract. Hence I have already confuted, as well as expounded, the doctrines of this flashy materialism. I proceed in the same way, affording Renan the opportunity of speaking for himself, and taking leave to oppose his errors ; while, in order to give some completeness to the volume, I shall take up in succession the grand leading topics of Man, God, Providence, Religion, Christianity, Christ, &c., in hope of to some extent proving a guide to truth, as well as a beacon against untruth. The method thus pursued exposes me to the reproach of repetition, but is recommended on the ground of fulness and fairness.

CHAPTER III.

RENAN'S VIEW OF THE SUPERNATURAL DISQUALIFIES HIM FOR WRITING A LIFE OF CHRIST : THE MIRACLES OF JESUS DESCRIBED, DEFINED, AND DEFENDED.

UNDERLYING all other disqualifications are Renan's opinions of the supernatural. With him there is properly no supernatural. Of course, then, there is no miracle ; but equally there is no God, no risen Jesus, no everlasting life,—in a word, no heaven or state of the blessed after death. If this is true, Renan's system of thought is a simple negative to religion. Why, then, does he trouble himself with the life of the purest and loftiest of religionists ? The cause is already pleaded, the verdict given, and only the execution remains to be carried into effect. Renan, disbelieving in almost everything that makes Christ Christ, has virtually condemned him by anticipation. Equally has he condemned all the great and solemn realities of which Christ is the centre and mediator to man.

Before we enter on the proof of what is implied in the foregoing paragraph, we must offer an explanation.

The word *supernatural* is not of our own selection. Had we the option, we should prefer the word *divine*. The divine and the human are two categories which exhaustively contain the manifestations of the highest life known to man on our planet. But the term *supernatural* has the right of pre-occupation. In consequence, we explain rather than discard it.

Considered etymologically, "supernatural" (Latin : *super*, above ; and *natura*, nature) denotes what is above nature. Now *nature* is a term which belongs to human speculation. Coming down to us on the pagan side of our culture, it may, or it may not, truly represent a Christian conception. If it does so, it has a right to continue in use ; if not, not. Its origin does not speak in its favour. It is hardly probable that a heathen term should represent a Christian reality. In truth, the word supposes a something apart from God, and something over which God has at best but imperfect control. That something may be a material world, a blind and dead substance, or fate, or destiny ; any way, something more or less independent of God. This something, however, which co-existed with the Creator in the form of brute matter, and which the Creator controlled as well as he might, formed with him the universe in what may be termed a twofold sovereignty. Among the earlier results of Greek speculation this conception was condemned as being dualistic, and with reason, for did it not:

imply two divinities? But though the word reaches us under this anathema, it cleaves to our modern speculation and confuses our Christian theology, perpetuating amongst us the utterly false conception which it represented of old.

The inconvenience might be tolerated were the idea which it conveys a Biblical one. It is not so. The Bible knows no God but God. God and God's works are its categories. Among those works is man; an intelligent being, made in God's image, and, consequently, God's child. Now, this view of the universe, which is Biblical and Christian, is also the view of all philosophy which truly acknowledges God. Here Christianity and theism are at one; and here both are broadly separated, as from pantheism (*all God*), which in some way confounds God with the universe; so from atheism (*no God*), which implicitly or expressly disowns God. Here arise two other terms: first, *naturalism*, which owns nature and nature alone; and this same *supernaturalism*, which asserts something above nature, that is God. Taken as thus contradicting naturalism, which is no God, either in the guise of pantheism or atheism, the word has a meaning, and may be of service. Yet not without ceaseless and vigilant caution; for if it is taken to denote something sundered from God, something independent of God, something existing in and of itself, it signifies what is unreal, false, and misleading. And yet this conception is very prevalent. It is found in the statement, or the implication, that God sits on the throne of the universe. It is found in the notion, which is as vague as general, that God is somewhere—as if a being limited in space could be God. God, in another view, is somewhere but only because he is everywhere. But if God is everywhere, then is he in as well as above his works.

Such is the idea of the Psalmist (Ps. cxxxix.) :—

“ Whither can I go from thy spirit?
Or whither can I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend the heavens, thou art there;
If I make my bed in the lower world, thou art there:
Should I take the wings of the morning,
Should I dwell in the farthest part of the sea;
Even there thy hand would lead me,
And thy right hand would hold me.
Should I say, Surely darkness will conceal me;
Even the night would be light about me.
Even darkness maketh nothing dark to thee.”

Such is the conception of the Prophet (Jer. xxiii., 23) :—

“ Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah,
And not a God afar off?
Can any hide himself in secret places
That I may not see him? saith Jehovah.
Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah.”

This language may not have the precision of speculative phra-

seology, but it has a far higher quality ; for while true in general conception, it is eminently calculated to impress the heart and renew the life.

God, as being in his works, dwells in man. Pre-eminently is his presence displayed in the human soul, when it is fashioned after the image of Christ. (John xiv., 23.) On the other hand, man is in God. The fact is clearly declared by Paul :—"In him we live, move, and have our being ; for we are even his offspring." (Acts xvii., 28.) The opening lines of the Bible represent God as anterior and superior to the universe, whose existence is the result of a divine volition. This sublime view, the only one in agreement with our highest conception, is confirmed by the apostle when he says :—"Of" (*out of* in the Greek)—"Of him, and through him, and to him are all things ; to whom be glory for ever." (Rom. xi., 36 ; comp. 1 Cor. viii., 6.)

It thus appears that God, considered as the Primal Intelligence, is before, above, in, and through all things ; while all things come from him, are under his constant care, and work out his sovereign will. While thus originating, pervading, and controlling all things, God is intimately connected with man, who shares his intelligence and wears his likeness. This intimacy is denoted by the statement that, while God is in man, man also is in God. Intercommunion between man and his Maker is man's highest condition and privilege. (John xvii., 21-23.)

In other words : God is the primal cause, the instrumental cause, and the final cause of the world, whether of matter or mind. All possible causation belongs to him ; and all is to his glory, because all conduces to the accomplishment of his wise and benevolent designs. There is then no other cause but God. But if God is the sole proper cause, other causes are nominal : that is, they are effects, they are phenomena. Of these, the highest is the human will, which, while dependent on God, has yet a power of secondary causation in virtue of man's divine sonship. The dependence of that will, in connection with its moral freedom, illustrates the interfusion of man's spirit with God's spirit, as well as their reciprocal action ; and when the two, retaining their individuality, become one in spirit, aim, and action, then is God well pleased, for his end in creation is answered, and then is man perfect, for the full possibilities of his nature are worked out. It is thus seen that we live in God's life, and God lives in our life, even as an embryo babe lives in the life of its mother, separate but connected, one in essence, though two in form. Similar is the interfusion of God and the universe. God lives in all that lives, and all that lives lives in God. Life of all kinds has its root in God. Accordingly, phenomenal life is the fruit of the divine life. The universe is God's manifestation, and man, its highest form, is God's image and representative. Hence, Scripturally considered, God, man, and the universe interpenetrate

each other in one view, and in another retain severally a distinct, but not separate individuality.

If, now, this is the Biblical idea of God (and philosophy has nothing better to offer), then God is viewed partially, and as partially so incorrectly, when He is described exclusively by any one of these several relations. He is indeed in, but only so as to be before; and He is before, but only so as to be in the universe which comes forth from him at the exercise of his will, signified by his word, and brings about results which are the embodiment of his purposes. Now, it is not a little noticeable that the relation of *above* is not expressly included in the scriptural description we have given. We do not say that such a relation may not be found in the Bible, but certainly it cannot be called the Biblical view. God's being above the world is one of the earliest, and, as such, one of the most unsatisfactory conceptions of the human mind. Specially inadequate is the notion when it is taken in union with the term *nature*, so as to form the compound term *super-natural*. The height of error is reached when nature is conceived of as an independent something, above which God sits and rules; for then you have two substances instead of one, two primal causes, two centres of force, and may well expect conflict, disorder, confusion, and weakness. Yet "above" may be used of dignity rather than of place, and so it may justly be predicated of God. This distinction, however, may have sprung from another dualism, that formerly recognised as broadly distinguishing mind from matter. And if the term is allowed to convey the notion that the two do not involve each other, it had better be allowed to drop into disuse; for it is not only adverse to the actual tendency of the highest thought, but it encourages the atheistic conception that God, or God's representative, may indeed compose the diseases of the mind, but is estopped from healing the disorders of the body—certainly from arresting the tempest, and restoring vitality even in man.

Here, however, is the basis on which we stand in using the term *supernatural*. There is to us a higher world than the world of sense. It is higher, because it includes of all realities the highest in the universe: it includes God, Christ, the Christian life, which is in its essence (being Godlike) and issues everlasting and blessed. This world is denoted by Jesus when he speaks of "my" (and "our") "Father *which is in heaven*;" of "the Kingdom of God," and "the Kingdom of Heaven," the kingdom which is in man's spirit and comes without display (Luke xvii., 20), and which is realised by man fully in the "many mansions" of his Heavenly Father's home, where Christ now is, and whither after death he will gather his true followers, transforming the many folds of earth into the one flock of heaven, under the loving eye of himself, the good shepherd. (John x., 11, 12 seq.; xiv.)

Hence with the writer the supernatural denotes the divine—

"the life of God in the soul of man," conceived of as initial and preparatory on this side the tomb, and unfolded, unfolded largely, yet so as to be for ever progressive on the other side. Denoting God's life in man, God's highest work, it denotes God's presence and operation in conscience, with its discipline and its benign results. Moreover, it denotes the sphere of God's special agency in this world and this state, and in every other. Finally, it denotes God's operation, as in ordinary, so in extraordinary, movements and facts, whether in man's spirit or in the universe. It breathes in the infant's earliest breath, and in the last whisper of the saintly Christian's prayer. Equally, and sometimes more strikingly, and so more usefully, is it present and active when the spiritually or physically blind eye is couched, or the deaf ear vitalised, or the dead body re-animated, or the fury of the sea assuaged. In the latter, as in the former, God's hand is not only exercised, but seen and owned by tokens unmistakable, for they are tokens of which every man, not embruted, possesses shadows in his own inner nature, and of which every Christian, in the degree in which he has risen to the height of his vocation, possesses in his spirit images clear, distinct, self-asserting, and self-verifying; even as the sense of duty, or the workings of parental love.

The universe, thus viewed, is the home of God and God's children, built and inhabited here, to be continued and completed hereafter; and Christianity is the bond which unites the two spheres together inseparably. Equally is religion, thus regarded, a self-evident power, which he who feels it can no more deny or question than he can deny or question the information given by his senses, or the consciousness of himself. Indeed, before he can renounce the moral and spiritual religion of Jesus he must uproot his moral nature, and transform his spirit into the spirit of Mammon or of Belial. And here we see how it came to pass that the great saints of the New Testament speak in terms of assurance so emphatic as to humiliate ordinary men, though, when the source and reason of their faith is known, their example ought to be our encouragement and our power.

There is then a higher life than what to-day is, and to-morrow is no more. There is an unseen and inner world, the world of spiritual being. In full, this is "the life of God;" a life, however, shared by man in virtue of his divine descent.

That life, though unseen by us with the outer eye, is by no means unknown. It is revealed to faith, its appropriate faculty or sense. (Heb. xi., 11.) If so, faith is essentially spiritual, as in its source, so in its objects and effects. Faith does not pertain to my creed or your speculation; neither to facts of memory nor facts of history; neither to theologies nor philosophies. Faith is the vital cord which connects man's spirit with the spirit of his Heavenly Father; and faith is the spiritual nutriment which

ensues. Our inner life, thus nourished, presents itself in our consciousness. It is myself as known to myself. It is my inmost self intuitively apprehended. As such it underlies my nature, and is the basis of my knowledge and certainty. If I know anything, I know myself. I am more sure of things pertaining to my inner self than I am of the laws of the stars, or the laws of crystallisation. Hence the inner world is to me the true world, and the inner life the true life, and hence God is involved in the acknowledgment which I make of myself.

That inner life is not only what I am, but the source of all I do. As it forms my character and determines my happiness, so it moulds and shapes my surroundings. Even the material world submits to its pressures, and receives somewhat of its lineaments. Man fabricates, not only his fortune, but also his own little world. Indeed, he possesses a certain creative power. Thus is he an image and representative of God, even as he is God's child. Each living in the other supposes and implies the other. Every man is a faint picture of the universe, including God and God's manifestations. In other terms, the universe presupposes God, and God presupposes the universe.

This illustrates the breadth of Renan's denial. He denies everything above nature, and nature with him denotes what is appreciable by the senses. Seen and unseen is an antithesis of which he knows nothing. With him the unseen is the unreal, the non-existent. It is in opposition to this negation that we affirm the supernatural. The affirmation includes God, and the sphere of God's operation and influence; that is, the spiritual or inner life known and recognised by every man in his own soul, and which, growing and expanding here, becomes after death fully blown, and bears immortal fruit. Of that moral and spiritual life ordinary men possess germs, and Jesus is the perfect fruit.

This sublime and practical doctrine of God and the universe, gradually taught by God himself, through the life and literature of the Hebrews, reached its culminating point in the Great Teacher, who, living a life of pure spirituality, in inmost communion with his Heavenly Father, saw and said for the instruction and ennoblement of mankind: "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him; God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John iv., 23, 24.) God, the spiritual Father of all, united with man his child, and, as his child, capable of holding spiritual relations with God, is at once the one word of the Gospel, and the highest, most comprehensive, and most benign word ever uttered. This is Christianity, this is the loftiest form of religion, and this is true philosophy. But then this includes the supernatural, for it includes God, Christ, and the life everlasting. Nay, not so much does the word imply them, rather they are the substance of the word.

Hence religion, apart from the supernatural, is a nullity ; and hence Christianity is the highest form of religion, because, springing itself from the supernatural, it abounds and overflows in the divine element. Not less is it rich in the natural, for as the natural is the efflorescence of the supernatural, Christianity, the highest, fullest, and least inadequate manifestation of God, must contain the natural in amplest measure. Accordingly there is a real and deep harmony between the divine and the human, and between God himself and God in the universe.

Here is a criterion of miracles. No miracle, even as no act (*e.g.* sin), is of God which is not at once natural and supernatural. If so, miracle is not a breach of God's laws, but a variety in God's method of acting—a variety which, how extraordinary soever to our present vision, is still an outcome of some law to be revealed "in fulness of time."

And hence, too, a criterion of theological truth. Theology, as the science of God, must own God as spirit, and man, God's image, as spiritual. If so, spiritualism is true theology, as well as true philosophy. Now, spiritualism in both makes man's spiritual nature his characteristic. But his spiritual nature, not his logical power merely, nor his ethical faculty, still less his imaginative, makes man man. Throwing its light, its warmth, its power, and its glory over each and all of these directions of his activity, man's spiritual faculty makes worship and loving obedience the essence of man's life. Indeed, it is man's title-deeds to his divine sonship. Now, a true theology in interpreting God to man interprets man to himself, and in so doing combines in one full beam all that man is, giving predominance to the predominant. Therefore a true theology is spiritual, for only our spiritual nature comprehends all our higher faculties. It follows that rationalism, which expresses but one side of our complex being, is untrue, and every system or form of religion whose root and fruit are produced in man's reasoning faculties, must be condemned as covering only a part, a small part, of the ground which claims to be occupied. But the logical element is the sole human faculty that Renan recognises. It follows that his system is fundamentally false. Equally does it follow that he is totally unfit to appreciate and set forth the most spiritual of religions, and the most spiritual of lives—the life of Christ. Reason, as a divine gift and a natural power, has its prerogatives. They are, however, not exclusive but inclusive, and consequently become valid and reliable only when they work and act in concert with man's other attributes. If sight is needful to make our reason give a true report in regard to visible objects, equally is faith, the eye of the spirit, necessary to a true report in regard to the invisible world. But for the union of reason and sight we should see men walking, not as trees, but double, and on their heads. So in spiritual matters, faith and reason must join hand in hand—the

former to supply objects of belief, the latter to sift and separate the chaff from the wheat. Both are indispensable ; so that there can be no religion without the united and harmonious action of faith and reason. If so, then a religion without faith is not a religion, though possibly it may be a philosophy ; and faith without reason is simply superstition. It equally follows that in whatever form of religion logic supplants emotion, to the detriment, it may be, to all but the suppression of faith, there you have nothing better than a philosophy without the name, and a religion without vitality and power. How often is such a religion founded with an intelligent faith, and made the measure, as well as the test, of a genuine faith. No faith is genuine which is not spiritual as well as reasonable. The two elements must not only combine, but combine in due proportion. Too much faith makes a man credulous, too little makes a man sceptical ; whereas the true disciple of Christ lives in and by "faith, hope, and charity," under the corrective hand of reason.

These observations have been made in order to place before the reader a clear statement of the antithesis we place over against Renan's anti-supernaturalism. But does his theory present the broad contrast here and elsewhere implied? Scherer has remarked, "The best way of making Renan known is to cite him." (*Mélanges*, p. 554.) Proceeding, then, to resume our quotations from Renan's work, we fall on one which would of itself suffice to sanction the tone we have employed. On the 40th page of his "Life of Jesus," its author declares the negation of miracle to be the idea that everything is produced in the world by laws in which the intervention of superior beings has no part. (13th ed. p. 42.) Here we find two averments. The first is a description of miracle. Miracle is an intervention of superior beings (or a superior being) in the laws of the universe. The view is founded on the now exploded untruth that God, being local and not universal, passes out of this sphere or part of the universe into that. A transitional God is no God at all. In consequence, the definition is incorrect, and should not have been put forward. It is easy to confute when you make the error yourself. There is no intervention in a universe where "God is all in all."

The second averment is to the effect that everything is produced in the universe by laws, to the exclusion of superior beings. Here laws are set in opposition to beings, and to superior beings. Whatever, then, is denoted by the strange phrase "superior beings" is shut out, and, instead, laws are acknowledged as the producing powers of the universe. What is this but an extrusion of the Creator from his creation? The Creator expelled, the creation remains a blank. Any way, it has no superior being. However, the universe still moves on, though whence it came, why it is in motion, or whither it is bound, we are not told. All we know is, that it moves—moves and produces in virtue of what the critic terms laws.

Now, the word *law* signifies that which is laid down or determined—of course, by a law giver. But where is Renan's law giver? With him the laws are the working forces of the universe. But laws have of themselves neither life, movement, force, nor sanction. Try the theory by applying it to things around us. The laws of the British empire are self-originated and automatic, neither requiring nor allowing the intervention of superior beings! In other words, England is made and governed by the Statute Book—but whence the Statute Book? Did "Coke on Littleton" make itself? Is the law against treason its own executor? It can hardly be supposed that even negative science makes the laws of the universe not only its supreme, but its sole, originating, ordering, and directing powers. No; law in the theory is taken in an unusual sense. The idea of God (or divine qualities) is silently put into the idea of law when law is called the highest power of the world. This delusion, negative science, is blind enough to practise on itself. Law is its God; not law as it actually exists, but law modified so as to suit its purpose. What is this but a tacit confession of the utter nothingness of such science? Possessing no formula to explain undoubted facts, it borrows one, and, infusing into it creative and ruling forces, declares it the one sole creator and sovereign, to the supercession of all "superior beings." Whence you may learn, that our author is driven by his theory to own God in reality while denying him in name.

"You have forgotten the movement." No! What is movement without a mover? Did you ever know a self-originated movement, a self-sustaining movement; can you even conceive of a movement which expressly excludes a being, a superior being? Does your watch "go" for ever? and when it is "down," will it "go" again unless wound up by your own hand, or the hand of some other being? The very idea of movement implies transition from some external or internal impulse. Shut out the impulse, the transition ceases. And so the world, in your theory, ought to come to a permanent standstill. Movement without a mover issues in immovability, and immovability is stagnation and death. The weights have run down, the clock stops, and the end of movement and sound is come. What will set the pendulum in movement once more? Any way, it must not be a superior being; and though a universe may make itself, according to your theory, no experience that ordinary men possess reports that a clock which was down ever took to going either of its own force or by force of some law. In truth, the law of the clock, like the law of the universe, is but the method of its movement, or rather the manner of its maker's action, in and through its mechanism.

You gain nothing here by pleading the law of continuity. First substitute phenomenon for law, for it is only a phenomenon you are acquainted with and have a right to plead. What, then, is

continuity? Mark, it is a notion of your own mind. But such a mental condition has no bearing on the movements of the universe. Does the conception represent a reality; and if so, what reality? By its derivation, continuity denotes unbroken connection—the holding together of that to which it is ascribed. By using the term, then, you affirm that the movements of the universe are unbroken. But this, if real, is not a cause, but a quality. Continuity can denote nothing more than uninterruptedness. Now, let this be an actual thing, and let it be absolute, and then you have made movement impossible. Movement implies play, change of space, advance; and as advance, so retrocession. There can be no movement where the moving body is as large as the space in which it moves. If such is the movement of the universe, the universe is a dead, motionless block.

Your alleged continuity is then only relative. But if relative, it is related to something; consequently something exists besides continuous movement. What is that except the moving power? You are thus, by your own theory, compelled to admit a moving power. What is it? The only alternative is—Mind or Matter? Here you have no foothold. Universal experience, your own included, decides in favour of mind; in other words, in favour of God. No; never will the mind of man, conscious as it is of originating, modifying, continuing, and discontinuing movement in sensible and external objects, be brought so to deny itself as to admit, as the cause of the universe, anything short of intelligence; and first must you endue your matter or your force with intelligence ere it will be possible for mind, unperverted by theory and undisturbed by debate, to acquiesce in a material origin of the universe.

But is continuity an actual phenomenon? Absolute continuity has no existence except in theory; and the relative continuity which does exist exists under conditions which not only admit but postulate mental action. This relative continuity, however, is by no means unbroken. Geology bears undoubted testimony to disturbance and convulsion in the outer world; and has not human life its Alps and its Himalayas, no less than its vales, its depressions, its gulfs, and its ocean depths? Neither physical, nor intellectual, nor moral, nor spiritual life is a continuous flow, but rather an ocean now tranquil, now disturbed, now rippling on a beach, and now roaring and tossing on hidden rocks or against towering mountains.

More clear but more offensive is the next utterance we cite in regard to Renan's view of the supernatural:—

"You throw away your time if you dispute with a person who believes in the supernatural. . . . It is as if you reasoned with a savage on the absurdity of his *fetiches*. Criticism, without arguing with minds narrow and resolved to remain narrow, pursues its own path."—"Liberté," iii., pp. 464-5.

Strange averment, that criticism pursues its own path without

arguing, when its author is continually arguing with or against the very persons he thus brands. If, however, arguing is here denied as the antithesis of employing reproach, the preceding lines give some justification to the statement, else why the imputation of being "resolved to remain narrow"? Christianity has wider horizons and freer movements than any form of materialistic anti-supernaturalism. However, knowing the force of repetition, Renan proscribes miracle in terms studiously diversified :—

"The first principle of philosophy (or criticism) is, that miracle has no place in the tissue of human affairs any more than in the series of natural facts. Everything in history has its human explanation, even when that explanation escapes from us from want of sufficient information."—"Etudes," Pref., p. vii.

If everything in history has its human explanation, it needs not a divine one ; nay, according to the law which forbids the admission of unnecessary causes, it cannot have a divine one. This is the exclusion of God and providence from the world.

The exclusion is in the following made universal :—

"It is the very condition of science to believe that everything is explicable by natural causes, even the unexplained."—"Explications," p. 23.

In one view this is true. The advantages arising from the division of labour have marked out the general domain of science into several departments. Hence we have physical science, whose phenomena are physical nature, and whose object is to ascertain facts and to group them into classes, the prevailing principles of which are termed laws. Thus we obtain the laws of attraction and repulsion. These, and other laws discovered by observation, are studied and classed so as to be referred to a common principle or central law, of which all other laws are expressions and exemplifications. This is the one law of the physical universe. Call it, if you will, gravity. Now, what are these laws in reality? They are called by Renan causes, and with him they are the sole causes. But are they causes at all? What is gravity? A general term, an abstract term, to express what?—the idea of cause? What is cause? Your own mind will answer, "Cause is that which consciously produces." Does gravity consciously produce? No truly scientific man will say so. Production implies consciousness, the adaptation of means to ends, some intimate relation between the producer and what is produced. This you know, for you know yourself. Are these qualities known to be possessed by gravity? Certainly not. Cast your eye on that cascade. The water, you see, falls—do you see anything which you could term the cause of the fall? Now take your flask, and with its aid drink of the water. Do you now recognise any cause? Yes, your own hand. And what moved your own hand? Your mind, your will, yourself. Here you have a cause—the cause of your refreshment. You have made the water serve your purpose. How? By an act of your own will.

Can you ascribe anything of the kind to the gravity in virtue of which that water falls? You cannot; at least if you do, you do that for which you have no warrant. I am afraid this mistake is often committed. An instance occurs in the words last used, "the gravity in virtue of which the water falls," as if there were in gravity some inherent force which causes the water to fall. There is not the slightest evidence to that effect. All that is really known is that in the actual conditions the water does fall, and that in other conditions the water would rise to the same height as that from which it fell. To assert more than is known is mere assumption. Where ignorance begins true science holds her tongue. "But," says Renan, "God is not there." What authorises your "not?" Nothing; the utmost you can aver is that science does not see him there. No more does science see there any proper cause. All it sees is phenomena, and all it can do with those phenomena is to group them. Moreover, those groups, which at the utmost are only mental classifications corresponding more or less with natural facts, amount to nothing more than phenomenal aggregates, which owe their very existence to man's faculty of abstraction. Indeed, they are human perceptions which have hitherto varied with every passing age, and which will doubtless continue to vary. Such things deserve not the name of cause, and are called even laws only by courtesy. The simple truth is, linguistical usages have personified natural operations, and these personifications even men of science, like Renan, take to be causal realities. "These are thy gods, O Israel" of unbelief. Gods made by human hands are they; and this is "the true land of chimeras" of which Renan dreams as existing in Christianity. ("Etudes," p. 209.)

We are now in a condition to see in what sense it is true that "it is the condition of science to believe that everything is explicable by natural causes." In other words, science—physical science, that is—is concerned with no other causes than such as are termed natural. Those causes are in truth only laws, and those laws are only perceptions or statements of classified phenomena. With causes, true causes, physical science has nothing to do. Hence was it that La Place might say he had surveyed the physical universe, and had nowhere found God. Of course not. It was not his business. Nor was his a process by which God was likely to be discovered. If you want to find God you must study causes; and before all, study yourself, the only proper finite cause, or rather centre of causation. When once you know mind and character in their causal qualities and effects, then, and not before, may you profitably look for God in the outer universe. Nor will the labour be long or fruitless. The mind which fills and actuates you will forthwith recognise the mind which fills and actuates what is called nature. The living eye of the Creator readily answers to the searching eye of the

creature. In other words, the child says, "Father?" and the universal Father answers, "Lo, here I am."

I have again used the word *nature*, much as I dislike it. Did I declare that of all troublesome terms this is the most troublesome, I should not exaggerate. It troubled philosophy in its cradle, and it troubles it now that it is advanced in years. Troubling philosophy, it has with equal steps troubled theology; and, troubling theology, it has troubled religion. Of course, in troubling religion, it has troubled the world.

This wilderness of troubles has come from man's propensity to personification. Nature, under the name of *Hylé*, the primal brute matter, whence all things were held to issue, is the oldest of the pagan divinities, and the earliest idol of philosophy. The idol is still worshipped. Conceived of as the centre or substance of phenomenal law, it is the god to which Renan bends his knee. With materialists of all kinds nature makes the sun shine, the moon walk in brightness, fertilises in the spring shower, and devastates in the tornado. It is, indeed, the supreme rival to the Creator. Men who are unable to see and worship God recognise and own nature most readily, little dreaming that nature is a figment of their own imagination. Such is nature, except when taken as a term representing the totality of the visible universe, rigidly apart from any ascription of causal virtue or energy.

You are now prepared to take measure of the statement that "everything is explicable by natural causes, even the unexplained." "Natural causes," what are they? Cause and nature are terms that refuse to go together. They express incompatible ideas. "Natural causes" can mean nothing more than classes of phenomena. Hence, in finding the origin and movements of the universe in natural causes, you declare that phenomena have no cause, or are their own cause. Any way, you own force as your God—force blind, deaf, dumb. Say "No" to this assertion, and then you say that the power you own sees, hears, speaks. In other words, you worship mind instead of matter, and obey a Father instead of fate or destiny.

While God in the universe is hardened into nature or force, God in history, denied as Providence, is shut out altogether, or cooped up in man's narrow bosom, "coming to consciousness" (as the phrase is) in man, being totally unconscious in and of himself. Accordingly Renan tells us:—

"The historical sciences, as well as the physical and mathematical, suppose that no supernatural agent comes in to disturb the progress of humanity; that that progress is the immediate result of the liberty which is in man and the fatality which is in nature; that there is no free being superior to man to whom may be ascribed any appreciable part in either the moral or the material movements of the universe."—"Explications," p. 24.

This is plain speaking. It contains these propositions:—

1. Negatively; no free being superior to man takes part in either the moral or the material movements of the universe.

2. Affirmatively ; these movements are to be attributed to the liberty which is in man, and the fatality which is in nature.

It follows that Renan's anti-supernaturalism shuts out God both from the visible world of matter and the invisible world of mind. God, thus banished from creation, is no God. Certainly He is no God to the universe, whose movements He does not originate nor direct ; He is no God to man, in whose interests He takes no concern. If in relation to the universe there is any God at all, it can be only fate in nature and liberty in man. Moreover, if there is any being superior to man, that being is not free, at least so far as nature and man are concerned ; and surely a being who is a slave is not God, and is inferior to man, who possesses and exercises liberty.

The publication of the words under consideration induced M. Gueroult to write to their author this letter :—

"Dear Sir,—Things must be called by their right names. If there is no free being superior to man, there is no God ; or, at least, there is no other but man."—"Opinion Nationale," 23rd Aug., 1862.

Renan gave this evasive reply :—

"All the faculties which common Deism ascribes to God have never existed without a brain. There never has been prevision, perception of external objects, in a word, consciousness, apart from a nervous system."—"Opinion Nationale," 4th Sept., 1862.

At an earlier period he had written :—

"Since being was all that has taken place in the world of phenomena has been the regular development of the laws of being, laws which constitute one and the sole order of government, which is nature."—"Liberté," iii., p. 465.

These bold and sweeping utterances call to my mind a passage in which Cicero characterises the arrogance of the ancient Epicureans :—

"Then Villeius in full confidence, after the manner of those pretentious men : then Villeius, fearing nothing so much as to appear ignorant of anything, replied as if he had just come down from the council chamber of the gods, or one of the intermediate worlds of Epicurus."—"Cic. De Nat. Deor.," i., 8.

Like the boastful Villeius, our modern philosopher speaks as if his eye had seen all things from the beginning even to the end, and thus, admitted to the secrets of the universe, is alike able and willing to report to less favoured mortals what is, what was, what will be—least of all, omitting what must be, with the true causes of each and all, expressly excluding, as does his prototype Villeius, "the creator-god of Plato, and the magical old woman whom the Latins call Providence," as being *futiles commenticiasque sententias* ; that is, to use the words of Scripture, "cunningly devised" "old wives' fables." (2 Pet. i., 16 ; 1 Tim. iv., 7.)

While thus setting aside God on an authority no less sure of its

own infallibility than the Papacy, Renan substitutes what? Something which has "a nervous system" and "a brain." If this is Renan's God, then of all the follies of superstition none is more foolish than this. Yet, without these there is no consciousness; so that if there is a God, and if that God has not "a nervous system" and "a brain," he has not consciousness, and consequently is no God at all, for an unconscious God is surely no better than a stock or a stone.

The clearing out of the supernatural thus affected, includes the Christ of the New Testament.

"Human things obeying laws more difficult to seize than those of inanimate nature, the action of a supernatural intervention is defended on this ground with more advantage. Jesus will remain a psychological miracle long after men will have ceased to believe in a physical miracle. Men cannot understand how the contemporary of Hillel and Shammai can be their spiritual brother, that the same sap produced in parallel lines the Talmud and the Gospel—the most singular monument of intellectual aberration, and the finest creation of the moral sense. Nevertheless this is explicable. An epoch, provided it proceeds from the common people as its centre, may give birth to the most opposite phenomena. It is only the products of tranquil periods that are consistent with each other. The appearance of Christ would be inconceivable in a regular and logical age. It is simply natural in the strange tempest which passed over Judea at the time of which we speak. A more extended view of the philosophy of history will show that the true sources of the life of Jesus are not to be sought for on the outside of humanity, but in the bosom of the moral world; that the laws which produced Jesus are not exceptional and transitory, but the permanent laws of human nature, applied in one of those extraordinary combinations of circumstances in which there appear simultaneously follies and sublimities—pretty much as geology, after long explaining the revolutions of the globe by causes different from such as are now in action, has come to proclaim that those laws are sufficient to produce the given changes. Let the same circumstances return and the same phenomena will re-appear, and, notwithstanding the apparent exhaustion of the creative forces of the human race, we shall see a new spirit come into existence spontaneously. . . . Let us not then seek the dignity of Jesus in a land of chimeras."—"Etudes," p. 209.

Renan has rebuked credulity as the creative cause of miracles. To judge by what you have just read, you might be excused if you declared that credulity had changed sides, and gone over to the philosophers. Certainly, no slight stretch of fond belief must have been required to declare, not merely that the age which produced the Talmud was of itself equal to the production of Jesus, but that, if the same age were to return again, it would achieve the same results, only perhaps with certain slight differences—a less grotesque Talmud and a sublimer Christ. If serious argument were necessary in such manifest hallucinations, it would be enough to say, that since that marvellous epoch many centuries have come and gone without bringing the slightest approach to the broad contrariety which our philosopher undertakes to account for and explain. As yet a second Talmud and a second Christ can be looked for only on the remote and cloudy horizons of critical speculation.

And yet the principles on which Renan sets aside miracles as

nonentities involve a *tabula rasa* of our Christian faiths. When you have once made up your mind to throw the supernatural overboard, you will in time find it will take with itself, not miracles only, but God, Christ, and immortality. Mistake not the breadth and depth of this issue. If man and nature are all that deserve our recognition, if they are the only known realities, the only known causes, then there is no ground for God and Christ and immortality in any sense now owned as representing reality. You reply, "Man and nature are not the sole objects of my recognition." If not of yours, none others are recognised by that spirit of the age at whose altar so many are prepared to bend the knee. If you follow the impulse so far as to deny a part of the supernatural, are you likely to stop until you have denied it altogether? Do not fancy this is a dispute about words merely. Deeper than all verbal disputes lie the great problems of the hour. The real question in debate is a living and true God in competition with a dead and false god. The real question in debate asks:—Is the God of the Bible and the God of Christ, or the god of the schools, as the schools now are—which is the God of our love, worship, and service? Is a gross or a refined materialism to direct our thoughts and determine our profession; is this, or a sober and genuine spiritualism, such as that of Jesus? Shall we give our hand and heart to Renan's ideals, which, having no correspondent reality, offer a God, the enchained, underlying substance of phenomena; a hope, but nothing to hope for; an immortality, whose reality is posthumous fame; a Christ, the simple outcome of the age of the Herods, a child from the womb that brought forth the Talmud, a product, at the best, of human nature, in whom God never lived, moved, or breathed;—shall we embrace this cloud of mist, or cleave to the simplicity, opulence, and measureless power of the religion which Jesus taught to his disciples, and bequeathed to all nations?

Do you doubt that this is really the option before you? "I," you say, "can give up miracles without giving up Christ." Yes, a Christ of your own making, but not the Christ of the New Testament. "All experience," you urge, "is against miracle." Not more than it is against God and immortality. Experience knows nothing of the inner world except religious experience, and that, in Renan's view, is credulity and illusion. And so far as what I may term outer experience goes, it declares that in dying men perish and are no more. Then, what does experience say in regard to God—but that, so far as it extends, God is nowhere to be seen? You have only to read the life of Christ with Renan's eyes to become as short-sighted as he, losing all outlook into futurity and all insight into the world of spirits.

"The world of spirits," yes, it all comes to that: there is or there is not a world of spirits, or a spiritual world. There is or there is not an inner sphere, or a deeper life, than what is seen by

the bodily eye or reached by logical processes. Of that momentous reality God is the essence, and our faith the eye, and Christ the herald and the representative. This is that *aionion* or Messianic life which Jesus came to raise men into out of "the body of this death," and into the perfection of which he passed when he expired on the cross, a forerunner and harbinger to all who have like precious faith with him. These things, in substance, are true or untrue. If untrue, Renan may possibly be right; but if they are true, then God is our Father, and we are his children, and men at large are brothers, and earth is a nursery, and death man's stepping-stone into life; and heaven, that is the spiritual world which lies all around us as well as above us, yea, rudimentally in us, even now—heaven is our home, the common home of all who, like Jesus, love God and serve man. Here, both theoretically and practically, is the real alternative. Denounce faith as credulity, and you are "without God and without hope." (Ephes. ii., 12.) Do justice to your nature, and recognise in its depths the "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. v., 6), and "all things are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii., 21 seq.)

If a spiritual order actually exists, what we know here of spiritual law and action points to an ever-lessening diversity between mind and matter there, which may ever tend to pass into ultimate unity.

At present a broad difference appears to prevail between matter and spirit. Matter is subject to certain physical laws, such as *vis inertiae*, weight, attraction, repulsion. These we call physical laws, because they manifest their action chiefly in physical or material things. But even here physical and spiritual things have points of union, as indicated by the terms *repulsion* and *attraction*. We speak of a repulsive idea and a repulsive corpse; and we are attracted by beauty of form and beauty of soul. The tendency of science is to break down the old barriers, and presage, if not foretell, a period when the physical and the spiritual order shall appear manifestations of the same central power. The same tendency goes to indicate that the source of that power will be spirit, whatever the more or less gauzy texture of the manifestations may be. This direction, however, has a favourable aspect in regard to certain miracles of the New Testament, in which the known laws of matter, such as gravity and impenetrability, oppose, with some persons, insuperable obstacles to belief; and it is not a little surprising that, while the discoveries of science are daily illustrating more and more fully the supremacy and glory of spirit, we are led of Providence to the thought that the very miracles of the Gospels which have occasioned most difficulty are precisely those which are most in agreement with the latest words of philosophy, by affording historical instances of the triumph of mind over matter. That triumph progressive, now rapidly progressive in this state, will, we are justified to expect,

be complete in the next ; so that what we term the physical order will have passed into the spiritual, in such a way that the actual opposition will be resolved in the synthesis of a higher unity. My meaning may be simplified by a Scriptural instance. "You must worship on Moriah," said the Jew, in the days of Christ. "No, you must worship on Gerizim," said the Samaritan. "On which?" asked the woman. "On neither," replied Jesus, "on neither exclusively, and yet on both, for the true worshipper worships the omnipresent Father everywhere."

Meanwhile it is impossible to mistake the marked differences which characterise the law and the action of spirit from the law and the action of matter. By my body I am confined to a single spot in the wide universe ; by my spirit I am present in all parts and all times of this my native planet, and can soar even into very remote regions of the starry world. The body grows but to decay ; the spirit grows to grow, decay being often barred out until some bodily breakdown stops the functions of life. Clearly, too, the law of the spirit is superior to the law of the body. Spiritual force moulds the character, intensifies the life, which it also preserves and prolongs ; while, so to say, it holds in its hand the health and vigour of the body. Indeed, what we term character, which is chiefly the product of the spirit, makes and unmakes individuals, as it is good or bad, that is, more or less purely spiritual ; while it also builds up national weal, multiplies the blessings of good government, makes a little island like England mistress of half the globe. All this looks as if spirit were the sovereign power in man and the universe, and that, as such, spirit were gradually ascending the throne of universal dominion. Certainly, the age in which manifestations of the kind are coming forth from so many quarters is not the time when those who wish to act wisely for themselves, or for their race, should weakly or foolishly submit to the trammels of either a theoretic or practical materialism. If ever, certainly now, every one's motto ought to be : *Sursum cor !* Upwards, spirit, upwards !

And now that we have been led to see the supremacy of spirit and the essentially spiritual character of faith, we may say a few words on the strange demand which Renan frequently makes that the question of miracle should be referred to what he considers competent authority—that is, not a jury of "good men and true," accustomed to adjudicate on questions of moral evidence, but a board of men of science—mathematicians, geometers, astronomers, chemists, metaphysicians. Well, we know what their conclusion would be. Of course, as men of science, they would bring in a verdict of "not proven." But then their methods of inquiry, and their objects of pursuit, have no relation whatever with the point at issue. As well appoint the Lord Chamberlain to command the channel fleet, or set a country curate on the woolsack. But if you will let those grand personages forget their science for a

moment, and sink into men, sons, brothers, fathers, I could not desire a better tribunal, for their general culture is a most important element for procuring a just and wise decision.

Such a decision, indeed, is quietly pronounced by the great army of scientific men up and down the world. It is pronounced every time this astronomer or that physiologist kneels in his closet or conducts the devotions of his family circle. No, the scientific world is not composed of sceptics. Science is a wide term, and includes not merely those who cultivate chemistry and other applied sciences, but those too who speculate in metaphysics or dogmatise in what is called the philosophy of history. To unite all these under one head, and to declare as theirs in general the opinions held by here one and there another, is equally false and delusive.

The culture, however, which is common to all these classes, even when it is culture of the heart as well as the head, is by no means all that is requisite. You must renew all the conditions under which the miracles of Jesus were wrought before their credibility can be duly considered and truly determined. His supernatural acts were the acts of an expressly commissioned and divinely attested messenger of God, in whom God's spirit of love, wisdom, and power fully and constantly abode, and who in all that he said and did was led and actuated of God, and that for the sublimest of all purposes, namely, the evolvment and perpetuation of the spiritual life of humanity. The question, then, that would have to be put to that highly cultivated and deeply religious company of domesticated lovers of truth is this: Are such exceptional works as those that are ascribed to Jesus possible, and if possible, are they probable; and if probable, do they appear to have been performed under the foregoing conditions? The answer they would give can be only conjectural with us. But in effect it has been already pronounced. The great men of the church, who form no small part of the great lights of humanity—the great thinkers, doers, sufferers—have answered, "Yes," not so much with their lips, as in the unspoken, yet valid and satisfactory testimony of their lives. And yet they were men of science for their times, as well as men of faith. Aye, but they toyed with the former while they lived on the latter. Not that there is any contradiction between the two. Science is man's discovery in God's universe, and faith God's revelation in man's soul. Both deal with realities, both work to make God known, both conduce to knowledge, culture, and life. The same in spirit, aim, and result, they work by different but concurrent instruments; science by observation and logic, religion by faith and experience; and both must combine, the one to try all things, the other to quicken and inspire all man's moving powers—both must combine to form the highest style of man, and so to present the full and perfect type of humanity and the complete realisation in a human

being of the Heavenly Father's eternal and most benignant designs. But for so great and so desirable a result science must be religionised by faith, and faith must be rationalised by science. Then the two will work harmoniously and effectually for the same divine end, the one not trenching on the other, still less regarding each other as mutually hostile and incompatible.

Science and Wisdom—oft disjoined !
 Though formed to be so brightly near ;
 How vain the love that lights the mind,
 But leaves the spirit cold and drear !
 Like sister angels, Truth revealed
 And Truth explored should onward go,
 Opening each healing fountain sealed
 By ignorance—from want and woe.
 This be their fate, thus on to move,
 Till earth shall brighten in their smiles ;
 And faith and freedom, peace and love,
 Bless all her tribes, and lands, and isles.

Such a happy union is not even among the dreams, much less the desires, of Renan. Truth is for the few ; the many are fated to wander in darkness and delusion. Corrupted by faith, which can do no more than fascinate and console them, men in general are irredeemable by philosophy. All that can be done is to destroy supernaturalism, and with a view to this result faith is denounced in these unsparing terms :—

“ Faith will always be in the inverse ratio of intellectual culture and vigour of mind.”—“*La Liberté*,” v., p. 133.

“ Our faith is a strange malady, which, to the disgrace of civilisation, has not yet disappeared from the circle of humanity.” (*Ut supra.*)

Having thus proscribed the fountain of the supernatural, and so put an end to religion, Renan proceeds to chant its dirge in the following lugubrious strains :—

“ Down till now religion has not existed apart from the supernatural. Be not surprised ; the contrary would have been a true miracle. The idea of natural law was unknown. Jesus forms no exception. Revelation and miracles were thus inseparable in the ancient world ; but now belief in the supernatural is weakening on all sides. Natural studies show us a fatal order there where the old theologians saw the exercise of free volitions, and historical science replaces the pious interpretations of texts and facts by explanations exclusively human. Thus, driven from nature and history, the supernatural is taking to flight. It has become a kind of original sin of which one is ashamed ; the most religious persons will accept only as small a portion as possible ; it is thrown back into the dark corners of the past.”—“*Explications*,” p. 28, seq.

He whom we love and revere as the true revealer of God to man, and of man to himself, is thus “ thrown back into the dark corners of the past.” Supernatural, like all the religious causes and products of the past, he recedes before the new light which drives the supernatural from the face of day. Hence Christ and science are totally incompatible. The former is first eclipsed and

then banished by the second. And thus disappearing, he takes with him not only miracles, but revelation; leaving what? "A fatal order there where the old theologians saw the exercise of free volitions;"—in other words, God, whose free volitions are the source and the support of the universe, is superseded by Fate. Here, then, we are back in the thick darkness of the most ancient paganism; and, as if to remove any residuum of the religion, the author adds: "Historical science replaces the pious interpretations of texts and facts by explanations exclusively human." The words translated into ordinary terms state that history, as conceived of by our critic, sets aside and disallows in the Bible everything superhuman. If a text or a fact exceeds human possibilities, it is false, and must be repudiated or curtailed. But Jesus is transcendently high, consequently he is lowered. Perfection, even relative perfection in man, has never existed; consequently a perfect Christ is an offshoot of man's rank imagination. Here is the key to Renan's "Life of Jesus."

In taking up a position of open and ardent conflict with the supernatural, Renan pronounces himself disqualified for writing a life of Christ. With him the supernatural includes the substance of Christ and his religion. There is, in consequence, a clear and broad contrariety between the philosopher and the Saviour. The contrariety is one of spirit as well as fact. It is general no less than particular.

Yet Renan pleads for unlimited liberty to criticise Christ. "Can criticism fear to be accounted irreverent when it attempts to disengage from its veils the true physiognomy of the sublime Master who said, 'I am the truth?'" Unquestionably truth is paramount. In every pursuit, and emphatically in religious concerns, truth is the one supreme concern. Yes; we would say deliberately if the face of the "sublime Master" is covered with a veil, rend the veil and let us see his naked countenance. It is that, and nothing but that, we wish to see. Yet coverings may be removed with a gentle, loving, and even timid hand; and if in any case, surely in the case of Jesus. Who would disturb a sleeping infant by removing its coverlet roughly? Moreover, the hand should be a competent one, and no hand is competent which has lost some of its fingers. Now, criticism has but one finger, whereas all five are needed. It represents merely the logical side of man. That side, we have just said, has, indeed, its rights, but so have the other sides of our multiform nature. In consequence, the moral, the emotional, the instinctively religious, nor less, the esthetical faculties, possess solid claims to be heard in every issue which affects historical personages, or the great present interests of humankind. Man is a many-voiced animal, and if his testimony is to be received, you must listen to all his utterances. Moreover, those utterances, if heard singly, must be heard also unitedly, and not until all of them are combined into one harmonious expression

are you possessed of the declaration of human nature touching the great problems of the universe. Take an example in that one which includes all others : God. What will you say touching God? If you are swayed solely by reason, you will perhaps say nothing, except that God is indescribable. Being pressed with the objection that an indescribable God is practically no God at all, you admit the implication, only excusing yourself by saying : It is better to be without God than to misrepresent God. While acquiescing in this atheistic nothingness, you hear a voice from your inmost being which, intensified by awe and mellowed by love, demands an invisible and Almighty Father as a ground of trust and an object of worship. Has that voice no rights? If the genuine utterance of your nature, why should it not be obeyed equally with the voice of your reason? Why close your ear to either? And if one is to be preferred to the other, why not the moral rather than the logical? Surely humanity is more in our moral and religious faculties, which constitute the distinction of our nature, than in the logical, which in a measure we have in common with the brutes. In truth, however, it is not a case for preference. The two, as being natural, are alike legitimate, and must be listened to in union ; and that the rather because they are both necessary to a solid conclusion, the moral and affectional voice to give the substance and the form of thought, and the logical voice to control and refine the latter, so as to present the former in some approach to objective reality. But if the action of both is thus necessary as a condition of truth, you must be in error so long as you follow only one. And here the natural impotence of philosophy comes into view ; for while accepting only one, it prefers that which does not give either substance or form, but is merely corrective. Electing this position for themselves, metaphysicians, as such, are farther from truth than ordinary men ; for the latter, lacking the corrective principle, possess the generative and shaping one, and so are led to such a position in the face of the universe as to receive light and heat from its central sun, the Sovereign Father. Thus, standing as component and accordant parts of the one great whole, they work in common with its movements, and accordingly work in union with its all-pervading Creator, Guardian, and Benefactor. So standing and so working, they accomplish their destiny in perfecting their natures, and thus attain their highest good. It is the reverse with your one-sided men. As well can a man that has lost one leg or one arm be and do all a man ought to be and do, as for the reasoners of our race to rise in virtue of the force they employ into the full altitude and just proportions of perfect manhood.

When, then, you speak of removing a veil from the face of Jesus, I must ask what means you employ for the purpose. If you use only one hand, let me advise you to use both. Perhaps, also, you keep one eye closed in the operation. Superseding the action

of your moral and religious nature, you solely reason about Jesus, and finding him to be discordant with the rule you apply, you regard as so many veils everything alien to your own philosophy. These you strip off. Having done so, what is left? A Christ made "by art and man's device," and not the Christ of history, nor the Christ of God. In truth, your measures are not long enough for compassing this great work; nor with such a sounding line as your reason supplies can you fathom the deep waters of this central ocean.

But it is not so much your faculty of reason you employ as one of its deductions. That deduction is a denial of the supernatural. What you term positive science disowns everything but natural law. What is, has been, and will be. Repetition is the order of the universe. Thus, the present is the standard of the past and of the future. The sole variations are variations not of kind, but of degree. More or less we may affirm of the universe not diversity. Even the more or less is fixed within narrow limits. Man, morally, religiously, intellectually, never sinks below four feet nor rises above seven. Accordingly, with you the supernatural comprises the transcendent. Hence gigantic forms are mere fancies, equally those in the moral world as those in the physical. If an historical personage stands higher than seven feet, he must be either disallowed altogether or cut down to the received standard. He owes his loftiness not to internal excellencies, but to stilts. Take away his stilts, and the man sinks to his proper level.

Such being the measure you propose to apply to Jesus, I must altogether deny your competency. Without God, how can you judge one whose central thought is the recognition of God as his root, his sap, and his fruit. Denying as a first principle moral and spiritual perfection in individuals, you are totally unable to measure and appreciate Jesus, whose speciality is that same moral and spiritual perfection. Denying the life to come in every sense, except as repetition in individuals and continuance in the species, you exclude yourself from all functions of judgment in regard to Jesus, who communicates the life everlasting by perfecting the present life. In a word, you have already decided against Jesus. We know what your decision will be, for we know what it must be. Of course, he did not come from God, for there is no God from whom he could come. Of course, God was not with or in him, since there is no Providence but natural law. Of course, he stands not at the head of humanity, for humanity has no proper head; the individuals of whom it consists move up and down on a dead plain; even the philosophers themselves being distinguished from others mainly by knowing that they know nothing, and that the bulk of men are dupes of their own illusions. Entertaining these views, you cannot be thought qualified for drawing a portrait of Christ. Nor do I suppose that you would make the attempt

were you not desirous of bringing history, morality, religion, and all human interests within the categories of your philosophical system. Of course, your formula of the universe contains the explanation of all its objects and phenomena—not God only, but Christ, Mohammed, Brahma, Sakya-mouni, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, and whatever else there is, whether great or small. This fact must be shown before your system can be considered free from exception. Hence your attempt. The problem is to pack all things within your critical portmanteau. If they are too bulky, they must be compressed or curtailed. You plead your right to make the trial. Conceded: the right is yours; make the trial, it may amuse you; it may possibly serve others; any way, since you wish it, spend your time and energy as you please, only do not expect those who have studied similar endeavours to anticipate from yours a result either impartial or reliable. I may, however, suggest to you, that a more promising exercise of your talents would be found were you to attempt to settle with your race, as you have settled with yourself, the first principles of your philosophy. All turns on the one central pivot, God. If God is known to man, is he not best known in Christ? If he is not, and cannot be known to man, of course Christ is in the main a creature of man's imagination. This method is shorter, as well as easier and more decisive, not to say more ingenuous. In consequence, the adoption of it will save time, spare the waste of energy, and lead to clear and definite conclusions. You urge that your method is fixed and unchangeable. I reply, that absolutism such as this is what I should not have expected from one who condemns absolutism in others so rigidly. But if you resolve to stand by your principles, do not be surprised that those who do not share them shrink from conclusions which they of necessity involve.

Such, however, is the absolutism of Renan. I will take an example. The first chapter of his piece on "The Critical Historians of Jesus" ("Etudes," p. 137) opens as follows:—

"Criticism has two ways of attacking a miraculous narrative (as for accepting it, such as it is, criticism cannot think of it, since its essence is the negation of the supernatural): 1st, to admit the substance of the narrative, and to explain it by taking into consideration the age and the persons whence it comes, as well as the forms received at this epoch or that for the expression of facts; 2nd, to throw doubt on the narrative itself, without allowing it any historical value. In the first hypothesis you undertake to explain the matter of the history; consequently you assume the reality of that matter. In the second, without saying anything as to that reality, you analyse the appearance of the narrative as a psychological fact; you regard it as a poem created in all its parts by tradition, and neither having nor being able to have any other cause than the instincts of man's spiritual nature. Those who follow the first method are called rationalists, in contradistinction to supernaturalists; and the epithet mythologists is reserved for the second."

Now, mark the absolutism here. Science cannot think of accepting a narrative containing a supernatural element. Why?

The essence of science is the negation of the supernatural. It follows that the supernatural is false. All that remains to be done is to "throw doubt on the narrative without allowing it any historical value." Who then can deny that antipathy to the supernatural is the parent of our critic's doubts?

One question may, indeed, arise. What does the term *supernatural* include? You answer, "It denotes whatever is above nature." What is nature? Nature is that which positive science acknowledges. It is the universe, man included. All above this is supernatural. Is God above nature? Then God is not. Is Christ above nature? So far as he is, he must be disallowed. Is immortality above nature? Yes; and immortality stands in the class of non-realities. Is revelation above nature? If such is its claim, it is a nullity. Is the Bible above nature? So far as it is so, the Bible is unreliable. Whence its supernatural elements is another question, and on this point you must consult either the rationalists or the mythologists.

What will be the result? You will learn the way in which its falsities came into existence. A poor reward for one who seeks truth, positive truth, as the sole aliment on which the soul of man can live.

If, however, the soul of man needs and demands truth, positive truth, it must go to some other source than positive philosophy, which philosophy, positive though it is, and absolute as may be its tone, is positive only in not being positive, for Renan declares that "the perfection of criticism consists in abstaining from conclusions." ("Averroes," p. x.)

Renan's antipathy to the supernatural lies in the core of his nature. It is shared by a large and increasing number of more or less cultivated persons. Its existence and growth are to be mainly attributed to the predominance of physical studies at the present hour. The establishment of the grand idea of law in the outer universe is the greatest triumph of this century. But the achievement, regarded on its exterior, has gone far to set aside the law giver in men's minds. The supercession can be but temporary. Physical studies and conclusions will not fail to show forth God, and that more nearly as He is, by showing not only the universality of law, but also the oneness of its empire, the intelligence of its essence, and the wisdom and benignity of its action. Meanwhile we are passing out of the narrowness of the old conception which confined God to some one spot in infinite space, into the grand and comprehensive idea which makes God pervade and yet transcend the universe which He governs and blesses. In the reactionary vibration the pendulum has gone from one extreme to another. God is now attenuated until he ceases to be God, and when God is a name or a nothing, the supernatural has neither existence nor meaning.

Subject to the general influence of the prevalent civilisation,

Renan is materialised, so as to be unable to see in the universe, anything higher and deeper than law, and man its subject and its victim. At least, whatever else he may acknowledge, that something, however set off with fine words, is little, if anything, else than a nebulous glare. But his anti-supernaturalism goes deeper than any opinion. It is a dislike,—a strong, prevailing, and increasing aversion. Hence, the breadth of the issue between him and Christianity is acknowledged by him in these words:—

"If miracle has any reality my book, (the 'Life of Jesus,') is only a tissue of errors. If miracle is a reality our method is detestable. But if miracle is an inadmissible thing, I am justified in considering the books which contain miraculous narrations as histories mixed with fictions, as legends full of inaccuracies, errors, systematic party purposes."—Preface to the 13th ed., p. v.

"Miracles are things which never take place."—p. vii.

"We do not believe in miracles as we do not believe in ghosts, in the devil, in sorcery, in astrology."—p. ix.

"There is no religious movement in which such deceptions do not play a great part."—p. xx.

Only one stronger word remains, and this he calls to his aid. It is the word *impossible*: "Miracles," he says, "are impossible."

Before I meet him on this broad ground, I think it my duty to give my own definition of miracle. I abjure everything of an abstract nature.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST DEFINED AND JUSTIFIED.

Miracle is not something, like the German philosopher's camel, to be constructed out of some one's individual consciousness, and described in abstractions destitute of corresponding realities. Miracle is not a metaphysical theorem, but a certain reality said to be historical. In other words, miracle is a term applied in the New Testament to certain deeds connected with the ministry of Jesus. What are they? If we ascertain their qualities, we shall know what is contained in the word. I have studied those qualities, and so learnt the meaning of the word. In the light then thrown on the subject by our sole authority, I define a miracle in these terms:—

A miracle is an act or condition which, transcending the usual order, is inexplicable by any known law, but which, as manifesting divine qualities, is referable to the free action of God, and so entering the sphere of law, is the product of the highest law; in other words, the will of God, the source and support of law.

Accordingly the essentials of a miracle are—

1. It transcends the usual order, so as to be inexplicable by any known law:
2. Manifesting divine qualities, it is of God, being referable to his free action:
3. Consequently, as the product of God's free will, it is not contrary to law, but within its province.

By God's free-will is meant God's power to adapt his acts so as to meet the varying wants of his intelligent creatures. This power is a permanent and constantly-acting power, inasmuch as all God's acts are ever-present volitions. To deny God this power is to deny his Godhead, for a being without liberty to do the best for man in the diversities of man's condition, is inferior to man himself, and in consequence can neither deserve nor receive man's homage.

It is manifest that the being here contemplated has a real, substantial, and individual existence, conscious in and of himself, possessed of a will, in power almighty, in existence anterior to the universe, his sensible manifestation; universal in presence, without end as without beginning, at once the same and multiform, freely pouring forth, especially on man, the riches of his own inexhaustible goodness, love, wisdom, and power.

With such a being miracle is as natural, easy, and proper as ordinary acts, and nothing is impossible but what is unlike himself.

Deny such a being, and you make miracle impossible, but then equally impossible is any and every divine act and manifestation.

Deny any one of the constituents of such a being, such as his self-subsistence, consciousness, liberty, holiness, and the result is the same.

The definition is drawn from the highest ideas of God contained in the Bible. It has for its special source the miraculous deeds of Jesus. Having its source in them, in them it must find its justification. Does it exhaust the facts of the case? If so, then the definition is an hypothesis or theorem which stands on the most solid ground, and can be set aside only by showing that either it contains too much or too little. In order to test its validity you must take the individual cases as essential elements in a movement made of God toward man in Jesus of Nazareth, for the avowed purpose of bringing man back to God. Such an object is in itself in the highest sense divine, and everything concurring thereto, whether ordinary or extraordinary, is also divine. Hence, the sole question to be asked is: Does this act or this word conduce to the great purpose for which Jesus was raised up and commissioned? If yes, it is divine, whether it be what you call natural, or what you call supernatural. If no, it is not divine, it is not of God, no matter what else it be or be not.

A miracle, in proceeding from freedom in God, corresponds to and encourages freedom in man. But freedom in man is the essential condition of his moral, spiritual, and intellectual growth. Perfection of character is perfection of freedom. Hence, miracle conduces to man's highest good. Here is its final cause, and its justification. The absolute sameness of law, the identity of perpetual recurrence, tends to petrify the human race.

Moreover, miracle is useful and desirable as an element in a divine revelation of God's will and God's love to his human offspring. It is an essential part of the manifestation of God's glory in and through his living, breathing, loving, and self-sacrificing son, his representative and our brother, head, and saviour. No miracle, no adequate and complete revelation of Jesus the Son of God, and the Son of Man. An ordinary dispensation reflects back as to its source the image of an ordinary revealer. As are my words and my deeds so am I myself; nor can I rise to a lofty position unless my acts become as elevated as my words. And if any difference may be allowed in the altitude of the one or the other, the preference for height must be given to the act. Not the great talkers, but the great doers are the truly great men. Christ transcends others mainly in virtue of his deeds. He is far loftier when he recalls to life the daughter of Jairus than when he delivers his beatitudes.

As every divine quality proves the divine presence, so miracle proclaims the agency of God, and proclaims it the more strikingly, impressively, and conclusively the deeper the stamp it bears of the divine hand, and the more signal and striking the manner of the manifestation. The first impression in this matter, like all first impressions, was the most profound and most vivid. Men looked on Jesus as he was in himself, and cried "Emmanuel!" ("God is with us!") from the depth of their awe-struck and raptured souls. They looked on Jesus, as he raised Peter's wife from her sick couch, and fell in reverent homage before him, as exercising divine functions. Calmer and colder are the sentiments that are excited in us when our eyes read the printed account of these great and solemn outpourings of the spirit of God. Yet even in the frigid atmosphere of our semi-rationalism, we cannot escape the sacred contagion, and if only we somewhat yield to the spontaneous movement of our hearts, we feel, at least for an instant, melted into a sympathy of holy and reverent joy. Sufficient illustration of the permanent influence and value of the miracles of Jesus. Indeed, they constitute no small part of the impellent power of his religion, for they not only solemnise, but move the heart; and a solemnised heart in movement will soon produce that newness of moral life which is the aim and the glory of Christianity.

Having given my definition of miracle, with suitable illustrations, I shall apply the rule thus obtained to the positions which the assailant has taken up. If those positions prove unable to bear the test, the reason is that, clutched out of the air, they are mere assertions, and consequently of no value. In trying them by this criterion I may be compelled to use some repetition, but this, instead of being a discommendation, will serve to aid some of my readers in understanding a subject which unavoidably bears somewhat of an abstract character.

"How can it be pretended that one ought to literally follow documents in which impossibilities are found. The twelve first chapters of the Acts are a tissue of miracles.

"Now it is an absolute rule of criticism not to give place in historical narrative to miraculous circumstances. This is not the consequence of a metaphysical system; it is quoted simply as a fact of observation. Facts of the kind have never been proved. All the pretended miraculous facts that could be studied closely resolve themselves into illusion or imposture. If a single miracle were proved you would not reject all those ancient histories wholesale, for after all, while admitting that a very great number of the latter were false, one might think that certain ones were true. But it is not so. All discussible miracles vanish. Is not one authorised to conclude hence that the miracles which are removed from us by centuries, and on which you have not means to establish a contradictory debate, are also without reality? In other terms there is no miracle except when men believe in miracle; faith creates the supernatural. The miracles which Catholicism pretends to perform do not take place where they ought to do. A miracle at Paris, before competent men of science, would put an end to so many doubts! But alas! this never takes place. Never has a miracle been performed before such as you ought to convert; I mean unbelievers. The condition of miracle is the credulity of the witness. No single miracle was ever produced before those who had the power to discuss and criticise it. To this there is no exception."—"Les Apôtres," Intro., p. xliii.

Two preliminaries here ask attention: first, the implication that the objector does not follow his documents literally; second, the assumption that the twelve first chapters of the Acts are a tissue of miracles.

Renan does not follow his documents literally. The reader then knows what he has to expect, for the critic means to construct his own authority. The book of Acts professes to be a record of actual events. It is such, or it is nothing. If it is such, it ought, as a record, to be followed literally. If it is not such, it is of no value, and should be distinctly disowned. Instead of taking this sole alternative, Renan takes some things and leaves others. The alleged ground of the distinction is the impossibility of miracle; that is, an assumption of the point at issue. This may be a convenient method, but certainly is not a logical one.

Then are the twelve first chapters of the book of Acts a tissue of miracles? Certainly not; and this is a gross exaggeration, unless the term *miracle* is extended so as to embrace the supernatural in the widest sense of the term, including the action of God's spirit on the heart and conduct of man. This criticism on my part is the more necessary because the statement of the author manifests the comprehensiveness of his denial. With Renan, the extrusion of miracle out of the Scripture and the Church is the extrusion of God out of the world.

"Miracles are impossible." He that pronounces a thing impossible must be a very wise or a very foolish person; very wise because he knows everything pertaining or that can pertain to the point, very foolish to utter such an averment without the requisite qualification. Now, you yourself declare, "It is for him who affirms a proposition to prove it." Obey

your own law by proving the miracles ascribed to Jesus impossible. You do not even make the attempt, and if you had succeeded in this case, you would still have to deal with all others before being authorised to say in general terms "Miracles are impossible."

Impossibilities have to do with the nature of things. Thus a circle cannot be a triangle. The two differ by definition, that is essentially. Neither can black be white. The two differ by denomination; men agree to call this white and that black. When, then, you declare miracles impossible, you say that in the nature of things miracle cannot be. A miracle can exist no more than a point can be a line. Wherein lies the self-contradiction? You have not yet defined a miracle, and therefore cannot be charged with direct and manifest error. But surely you ought to have told your readers what it is that you pronounce impossible. What divine attribute or law does miracle nullify or interrupt? The exceptional and the extraordinary are not breaches of law. The supersession of one law by the interposition of another is not a rupture, but an exemplification of causal continuity. The ascent of a balloon illustrates the law of gravity which it appears to overcome. Nothing is impossible to God but what is unreasonable, useless, unproductive, idle, vain, untrue—in one word, ungodlike. And whatever is godlike is possible in a system of things in which God is supreme—God that is sovereign love, goodness, wisdom, power. If, however, one of these qualities is found, there God is, and there every act is possible; nay more is probable, which coming from love promotes love, coming from goodness promotes goodness, coming from wisdom promotes wisdom, and coming from power promotes power. And wherever these qualities are absent and the contrary present, there God cannot be, and there, and there only, miracles are impossible. Hence, in the impersonation of wickedness, goodness is impossible; and equally is imposture impossible in Jesus.

If, then, it is an absolute rule of criticism to declare miracles impossible, criticism has exceeded its authority. All that you can be justified in saying is that with my criticism miracles are impossible. But besides your criticism there is another and another. One school of criticism believing in God believes in miracle. A universal criticism is unknown. There is no such reality as may be denominated by the general term *criticism*. The term is indeed often employed by some critics, but its use shows chiefly how little they understand their own function. What, at the best, is criticism but the decision of a finite and fallible being? Who, that really knows himself, will pronounce anything impossible but self-contradictions? And Renan, least of all critics, is at liberty to declare his own opinion an "absolute rule," since he altogether denies the absolute. However, having made the huge assumption, he proceeds to apply it. Criticism is prohibited from

“giving place in historical narratives to miraculous circumstances.” How quietly is the Gospel thus placed on a level with certain chapters or passages in pagan history, and in Romanism, as if the two were parallel? The very principles we have laid down touching the miracles of Jesus supersede most of the latter, while they compel a recognition of most of the former. Moreover, we protest, and protest emphatically, against the implication that the evangelical history stands on the same basis as all other history. The former is altogether special. It is the history of the grandest yet the simplest of human lives, and of the introduction into the world of the purest, noblest, most needed, most acceptable, and most beneficial of all religions. This exceptional character justifies exceptional means and methods. Exceptional means and methods are natural, if not necessary, in such a system of providential action. Indeed, everything is to be expected that is in unison with so grand and lofty a manifestation of the divine will. Nor, indeed, could Jesus have been what he is in the history had he not displayed the supremacy of his spirit over, not only the disorders of the mind, but also the disorders of the body, and the disturbing forces of external nature. A grander truth, a more important truth, was never revealed to man than the supremacy, the sovereignty, the omnipotence of the spirit over everything that is not the spirit. What is this but the assertion of God’s almightiness, and of man’s resistless potency, so far as he works for God’s purposes and with God’s resources? The superiority of mind over matter thus proclaimed is an illustration of that primal command, “Subdue the earth and possess it,” and it is a promise of its complete fulfilment in due course, involving man’s victory over, not only mountains, and valleys, and seas, and space, and time—as we now see the great facts unfolding themselves in our railways, and tunnels, and electric telegraphs—but also over sin, suffering, and the grave. To me, every miracle wrought by Jesus attests the reality of the spiritual world, vindicates its supreme authority, and foretells my own individual immortality. The Gospels, stripped of the miracles of Jesus, would sink into records divested of their highest glory. There is a criterion of divine truth superior to criticism, and that criterion not only does not exclude, but demands the particular facts in the Gospels which our critic disallows.

However, this absolute rule of criticism is, it appears, founded not on metaphysics, but observation. Now, observation is the attention which I, as an individual, pay to this or that. Respecting the particular object thus observed, observation enables me to affirm something. Beyond this, observation cannot go. Individual in its origin and action, it is individual also in its results. The qualities which it possesses separately can be only the sum total of its repetitions. As the whole is made up of its parts, ever so great a number of individual observations do not justify an absolute averment.

Has Renan, then, observed or studied the miracles of Christ himself?

Certainly not, but only narrations of them. Observation in such a case is out of place. It has no jurisdiction. But even if it had, would it authorise a universal negative? What leap from the particular to the general? *e.g.* "I have observed certain miracles and finding them spurious, pronounce all miracles spurious." Take an example: A is dishonest, therefore every letter in the alphabet represents the name of a dishonest person. But wider still is the gulph over which the critic springs, for he asserts a universal proposition and on it founds an absolute rule: "Miracles are impossible;" hence, the "absolute rule," &c. And this he gets to, not by metaphysics, but observation! With his own eyes he has seen that in the universe not only is there no miracle, but that all miracle is impossible! And yet he shuns positive conclusions, and is very far from being dogmatic.

However, "facts of the kind have never been proved." Facts of what kind? So loose a way of writing ill becomes the gravity of the subject. And the statement is simply an assumption. "Yes," as well as "No," has been uttered on the point. Why should not my "Yes" be as good as your "No"? Anyway, it is a matter of dispute, and consequently it lies beyond the bounds of certainty. If uncertain, the proposition you lay down supplies no solid ground for the emphatic and universal negative contained in the averment that miracles are impossible. And yet see what that infirm, tottering platform is made to bear. "Facts of the kind"—again we ask, facts of what kind? Surely you ought to have given a formal definition of miracle before you declared it impossible. To argue on impressions can lead to no satisfactory results. He that withholds or postpones definition talks at random, however wide his generalities, however positive his tone.

The next averment is—"All the pretended miraculous facts that could be studied closely resolve themselves into illusion or imposture." What is included in "all the pretended miraculous facts that could be studied closely"? Where and when were they studied? By whom? Where is the report to be found? I ask for information, being totally ignorant of the grand assize here supposed. Particular instances have been studied, especially some of those claimed by the Church of Rome, and reports have been made. On the one side Rome declares them all realities, while others disallow these, but hesitate about those, being for the most part timid to charge illusion or imposture on the persons with whom they originated. If, as we believe, this statement is near the truth, then that of our critic is another exaggeration.

"If a single miracle were proved you could not reject all those ancient histories wholesale." Well; the Christian holds that not a single miracle, but many miracles, are proved on good and

sufficient grounds. But those grounds are of such a nature as to save him from proscribing other miracles "wholesale." So sweeping a method finds no favour with him. The proof of one miracle does not preserve or condemn a host of others. Each one must stand or fall on its own merits. If a Romanist miracle, or a pagan one, bears on its visage the features of the divine hand it is to be admitted no less than a Christian one. Reproduce the conditions which attest the miraculous deeds of Christ, and you give sufficient reasons for accepting the miracle. In truth, however, the objector stands on his own ground that miracle is an impossibility, and accordingly deals with the matter in this "wholesale" manner.

"All discussible miracles vanish." This averment makes a distinction. Some miracles, it appears, are discussible, some not. Which is which? No answer is given, so that to our ignorance of what with Renan a miracle is, we must add the ignorance of what miracle is discussible and what not. Anyway, "all discussible miracles vanish." He that says a thing ought to know it. Does Renan know of his own knowledge that which he here says? Has he seen all discussible miracles vanish? Yet on a statement, which at best is an exaggeration, criticism founds an absolute rule. The notion seems to stand in the critic's mind thus: Miracles distant in time are unreal, because discussible miracles vanish. Discussible miracles, then, are such as are not distant in time. What are they? I know no pretensions of the kind, but such as are claimed by Romanism. This, in consequence, is the argument—Roman Catholic miracles are false; *ergo*, the miracles ascribed to Jesus Christ are false. What logical connection is there between the premises and the conclusion? Does it follow that because "the Sacrifice of the Mass" grew out of the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Supper is a fiction, or a fraud, or a delusion, or a corruption? But on what basis does the premiss stand? Does Renan of his own knowledge know that Roman Catholic miracles are false? Has he examined them? those particularly that are not distant from him in time and place? He has not, for he has to find them first. The class of discussible miracles is a pure invention. Thus, on a pure invention criticism founds an absolute rule.

Nor is this enough. He adds: "In other terms; no miracle exists except when you believe in it; faith creates the supernatural." An immense logical leap is this. At one bound our critic is over a great gulph. Where is the bridge? There is literally none. Let us look and see. "Faith creates the supernatural," because—what? Because we have concluded that distant miracles are without reality. Say that it is so; how does it follow that faith creates that which is without reality? Have, then, unreal things only one source? and is faith that source? Is every unreal thing an offspring of faith? What? does fear never create unreal things?

Nor love? nor hope? nor imagination? Why then is faith selected? Is it because of the blow thus indirectly dealt at an old friend, namely, Christianity in the shape of Romanism?

I am not concerned to defend Romanist miracles, but I must protest against the proposed test. Clearly, with Renan, miracle is some kind of legerdemain. Are you a conjuror or a magician? This is the issue with him. Perform your feats, and perform them before a competent audience, and then a reliable decision will be given as to whether they are illusions or delusions, clever tricks or artful cheats. All pretensions of the kind we hand over into his hands, to be dealt with as he may please, confident that we have parted with nothing that at all bears on the real point at issue. That point the critic evades, hiding himself in a cloud of words.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST WERE SUBJECTED TO SCRUTINY.

Amidst those words there are some whose universality lays their utterer open to question. When, for instance, he declares that never was a miracle performed before unbelievers, he must be reminded that most of our Lord's miracles were performed before unbelievers, such as he wished to convert. Nor was the appeal unproductive. Moreover, his miracles were produced before the highest authorities of Judea, who had the will as well as the power to discuss and criticise them. And do we not find in the Acts (iv., 13 seq.) the following distinct admission by the Sanhedrim in regard to the miracle wrought by Peter and John on the lame man. (iii., 1 seq.)

"And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it; but when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it, but that it spread no further among the people let us straitly threaten them that they speak henceforth to no man in this name; and they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done."

The naturalness and sobriety of this narrative attest its reality. If ever history represented simple facts, this is history. Every competent judge would say so but for the miracle. In other terms the prepossessions of unbelief are allowed to prevail over the clearest judgment of good sense, right feeling, generous sympathy, and literary taste, for all these vouchers speak for the genuineness and moral beauty of the passage. "It is a legend," you reply. What! the noble answer made by Peter and John a

legend? How, then, do you discriminate between legend and history? However, if this is legend, it is worth whole volumes of what is called history.

We have before been told that "faith creates the supernatural." At the end of the quotation on which we are animadverting it is affirmed that "the condition of miracle is the credulity of the witness." One of the old schoolmen declares that error lurks in generalities. If so, and experience confirms the statement, error may be suspected in these two absolute averments, and not in these only, but in statements of the same kind in the use of which our assailant is so profuse.

Here, however, we have his conception of faith. Faith with him is credulity. I will not stop to scrutinise the position, but requesting the reader to note the fact, proceed to inquire whether the primitive disciples, on whose authority our sacred records rest, were or were not credulous. What is the import of the general tenor of their conduct? Were they in haste to adopt the new religion? Did they straightway acknowledge the Messiahship of Christ? and when they did acknowledge it, did they acknowledge it in its moral and spiritual sense, or in a carnal sense of their own? And did that acknowledgment endure in the day of trial? Were the disciples credulous in Gethsemane? in the court of the High Priest? at the foot of the cross? When Jesus was laid in the sepulchre? No! "they all forsook him and fled." (Matt. xxvi., 56.) "Credulous"? say rather, incredulous; "slow of belief" Luke (xxiv., 25) describes them, in Christ's own words, not only after his resurrection, but all through his public ministry. A few particulars will justify the assertion. Witness the gentle reproof administered by Jesus to the rash Peter as he began to sink beneath the wave which he had thoughtlessly tempted: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. xiv., 32.) Witness the remarkable words Jesus uttered when the disciples had failed to heal the lunatic: "You could not cast out the demon because of your unbelief; yet if ye have faith even as a grain of mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matt. xvii., 14 seq.) Witness the emphatic precept enjoined by Jesus on his disciples when they expressed their bewilderment at the withering away of the fig tree; "Have faith in God." (Mark xi., 22.) Witness the request they made to the Master when they said: "Lord, increase our faith." (Luke xvii., 5.) Witness the positive refusal of belief made by Thomas except on conditions prescribed by himself: "Except I see in his hands the print of the nails, &c., I will not believe." (John xx., 25.) Witness the candid statement that while some did homage to the risen Jesus on his appearance in Galilee, others "doubted." (Matt. xxviii., 17.) Witness also the candid admission that Peter, long after the resurrection, doubted as to the import of a vision which declared one of the widest and most humane of the

revelations of the Gospel, namely, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." (Acts x., 15.) A similar series of testimonies may be found in the following passages, in which the auditors of Jesus are directly or indirectly charged with unbelief: Matt. xiii., 58; xvii., 20; Mark vi., 6; ix., 24; xvi., 14. The last reference contains the ground of their lack of faith. It was their "hardness of heart." In other words, it was the predominance of their animal nature. Mark that Jesus does not lay the blame on their conclusion, so much as on its source. It was not their logic that was at fault, but their character. They had not that moral vision which alone could see and acknowledge his moral grandeur, and so own his spiritual power. Lacking that purity of heart which sees God wherever God is manifested, they were unable to recognise his representative, or enter his kingdom. Their lot, in consequence, was with the unbelievers of the day. Had this "hardness of heart" been absolute, absolute would their exclusion have been. But Jesus bore with his morally weak, blind, and powerless disciples, in hope of better things to come, and so at last made and found them not unfit to bear his good news to the world.

Beyond a question then the sole record we possess as to the moral condition of those who "accompanied with" Jesus describes them as the reverse of credulous. Not with their readiness of belief, but their slowness, had Jesus and his cause to contend. Far, very far, remote from these early scenes was the credulity which created the fables of the Apocryphal Gospels and other "lying wonders" against the spirit of which primitive Christianity struggled, but which Paul foresaw as a part of the retinue with which, in a degenerate age, the man of sin, "the mystery of iniquity," would come; which, however, the apostle knew the Lord would, from time to time, "consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his presence." (2 Thess. ii., 3 seq.)

It is not a little unfair to impute to Christianity the very spirit which it did its best to prevent at the first, and to withstand and correct afterwards. Certainly what precedes justifies the statement that the miracles of Jesus, even as the whole of his ministry, found an ungrateful soil, and that the tone of mind which prevailed in his immediate circle was adverse to belief. In regard to the wider area of Jewish society, it must here suffice to say that of its two chief ruling powers the Pharisees were averse to Jesus on account of his anti-sacerdotal prepossessions, and the Sadducees stood aloof from him in scorn on account of their own scepticism. Where then did he find support? The sole earthly support he had was so much soundness of heart as remained in the mass of the population. This, however, was a fragile resource at the best, and in the hour of need it broke down altogether. Hence, we are led by our author's antagonism to a conclusion in

favour of the position that Jesus was sustained and led by the almighty hand of his Heavenly Father, of which miracle was at once a sign and a seal.

Before we leave the quotation, we ask the reader to select and put together the instances of absolute averments which it contains, the last of which is: "To this there is no exception;" and then to say whether in Renan he finds a calm and impartial judge, a severe and just critic, or a heated and eager assailant?

RENAN'S DEFINITION OF THE MIRACLE EXAMINED.

A definition of miracle is at length supplied.

"Miracle," says Renan, "is a formal derogation, in the name of a particular volition, to known laws. What we deny is miracle as an exception; particular interpositions, as that of a clockmaker, who having made a clock, a very fine one it is true, yet to which he is obliged from time to time to apply his hand, in order to supplement the insufficiency of its works. That God is in everything, especially in all that lives, in a permanent manner, that is exactly our theory; we assert solely that no particular intervention of a supernatural force has ever been established. We deny the reality of the supernatural in particular, until a fact of the kind is laid before us."—"Les Apôtres," *Introd.*, p. xlvii.

If God is in everything surely he is the active essence and cause of everything, and if of everything, then of every particular thing. Why, then, this objection to particulars? Is not the whole made up of its parts, and can God be in all if he is not in each? But what is the divinity whose existence you thus admit? Is it anything but the material substratum of the universe, out of which all things come and into which all things return, thus keeping up that ceaseless transition which is all the real movement and all the real life that your writings recognise?

If the difficulty lies in the notion of intervention, it is a difficulty that the objector himself imports into the subject. A God who is everywhere can of course intervene nowhere, for how can He intervene anywhere when he is already everywhere?

Equally imported by the objector is the phrase "derogation to known laws." Derogation is an offensive word. A character that undergoes derogation loses some of its excellence, and a law subject to derogation is little better than a law superseded. God's laws are neither impaired nor annulled. A breach of law cannot be ascribed to the great Law-giver and Law-sustainer. But a law which yields to a higher law only exemplifies the prevalence and supremacy of law. The ascent of the sap in spring does not derogate from the law of gravity, while it owes its movement to normal forces. Here is a compound made up of an acid and an alkali. I will separate the two. See, now they exist apart. The resolution of their bond has been effected by a force which has a greater affinity for one of them than they have for each other. What breach of law is there here? Yet, if you were so pleased, you might designate the process a derogation to law;

while, in reality, law is exemplified and honoured in the change. So in miracles. Miracle is not the supercession of law, but law prevailing under altered conditions. Of those conditions God is the author, even as He is the author of all things. The immediate and sole proper author of the ordinary, He is no less the immediate and sole author of the extraordinary. Nor is the departure arbitrary. The same purpose which establishes and accomplishes what is usual is the ground of the unusual, for both have their origin in God's wisdom, love, and power, and their purpose and end, in the accomplishment of his will in the highest attainable good of his children of the human race.

The simile of the clock is not a happy one. The clockmaker and his clock stand on the outside the one of the other, and so cannot represent the closest of all mutual relationships, that which the Creator has with his creation. The clock, too, must be wound up from time to time, whereas the universe moves on no less ceaselessly than quietly in its wide career. Then, there was a time when the clock was not, whereas Renan will hardly say the same of the universe. Moreover, the time will come when clock and clockmaker will be no more ; but Renan's clock will last for ever, whatever may become of his clockmaker. And, since he has chosen a piece of mechanism for his illustration, he must be reminded that a clock may be made to strike thirteen instead of twelve, on any given day, and that without the aid of any particular volition. What then ! is law violated thereby ? Nay, rather it is exemplified and upheld.

We love not such mechanical illustrations. At the best they can serve only to explode the exploded. God and the universe do not exclude but interpenetrate each other. They are not so much two as one ; God, the author, the source, sustainer, and benefactor of the universe, and the universe the visible manifestation of God. In consequence, what we call its laws are God in action ; the modes of his operation, the goings forth of his majesty, the expressions of his will, the effusions of his presence, the flowerings of his love, the fruitage of his almightiness. Ordinarily these flow forth not in continuity alone but in sameness of sequence and unity of expression. The reason is that such a manifestation of God is on the whole the best discipline for man. Uniformity is a requisite indispensable to human improvement and progress. But uniformity is unquickening. Sameness composes men to sleep. They need to be startled from their brutish indifference. The required effect is produced by miracle. The ordinary, which may harden into deadening routine, is followed by the extraordinary, which, being divine no less than its predecessor, accomplishes a good for man otherwise unattainable. In speaking on the matter we are compelled, by the insufficiency of language, to imply a change. But no change has taken place in God. The outer manifestation, vary as it may, is still the simple expression

of his eternal and invariable thought. As God's being is a perpetual now, and his presence an everywhere, so his volitions are a ceaseless and unbroken outflow, prompted in their variations, as much as in their unity, by the love which forms the essence of his nature. What, then, is miracle? It is God acting by unusual means when such means are best suited to his gracious purposes. Ordinary wine is expressed from grapes by human hands. He who now works by those hands and with those grapes can surely work without them, for, whether with or without, He is the sole proper worker in the universe, and has boundless resources at his disposal, nay, rather in and of himself.

If it were needful to illustrate the prevalence of variation in God's school, instances would present themselves in countless number. Certainly God in history is not God in uniformity. Unity in diversity is the law of God's action. What else are the great sages of antiquity? What the patriarchs? what the prophets? What, too, the great poets? the great thinkers? the great doers? What but in some sense "derogations" to the law of sameness, departures from the strict line of repetition, elevations above the dead levels of the everlasting plain? Even the physical universe, as we have already intimated, has undergone revolutions most numerous and most thorough. The aspect of the surface of the earth suffices to demonstrate the fact. Not one of these but had its final, not less than its primary, cause in God's unfathomable and inexhaustible goodness. If these varieties were demanded here by his love and wisdom, how much more were varieties called for in the moral world? And the moral world it is rather than the physical that we ought to study when we stand in face of alleged variations in God's action. If the seat of miracle is sometimes the physical order, its source, its design, and its justification are always to be looked for in the moral and spiritual order. Of that order variation is a law as much as uniformity is a law in the outer world. Without variation in the moral world there can be no adaptation to the changing conditions occasioned by the human will. How erroneous then must be the transference to the moral order of formulas deduced from the physical order.

And yet Renan demands a permanent manner of God's existence in every thing. I know not very well what he means by a permanent manner. If God really lives and acts in the universe, He lives and acts in its unending variety. What indeed is that variety but manifold expressions of the numberless shapes, hues, and tints of the unsearchable riches of his nature?

And here—to declare positively what I but now hinted at—there arises the dividing line between Renan's views and mine. His God *is* in everything, but not as an active, free, and self-communicating being. He is rather the inert substance of things, without love, without wisdom, without consciousness, without will,

and so properly without life. As such a God is not the universal agent, so the extraordinary cannot be ascribed to him any more than the ordinary. With such a God the supernatural is simply out of the question, for only the natural is known and recognised. With such a God, too, law is not so much supreme as self-subsistent and alone in the universe, and the concentration of law is the sum of cosmical forces.

But then, who can be content with this dead and powerless notion? It does not satisfy even the intellect, and the heart, frozen in its presence, hurries to nestle in some human bosom, pitiable no less than itself, for the two are orphans, albeit both superior in sentiment, aim, and thought to the great Pan who in some way underlies their existence.

We have just been discussing miracle in the abstract. We have consented to do so in order to meet the objector on his own ground. The real question at issue is, however, a narrow one. It pertains to certain deeds said to have been wrought by Jesus. They are deeds of an exceptional kind, avowedly performed to show forth God's glory in their performer, and to work with other influences in order to effect a great moral renovation and make men, after their measure, like their Heavenly Father. These are the facts in question. Are they "impossible"? The pretension can be pleaded only in regard to one of their qualities—they are exceptional. What! are exceptional and impossible interchangeable terms? If so, then the smallest deviation as well as the largest is impossible. Where, then, is your dividing line? Do you allow small miracles and disallow great miracles? "No; I disallow them altogether." Then you disallow the exceptional as the exceptional. Yet do not instances of the exceptional crowd upon your sight? Geology is full of such instances. So are all the sciences. So is everyday life. So is history. You yourself assert that at one period nature and man possessed and exercised creative powers. "The ability has died out." Yet you hold that if the proper conditions were renewed the ability would return. Here, if anywhere, is miracle, only your miracle is a fancy instead of a fact, and your conditions assumptions instead of realities. Let both be true, then miracle is the result, for then God does, through finite instruments, deeds which are special to himself. But if God once exercised creative functions through human "spontaneity," why may He not create or re-create through Jesus? who of all others possessed most of his own spirit, and wielded extraordinary power at least over human hearts and human society.

The case now submitted to your consideration is not one in which exception is affirmed, while the conditions remain the same. The implied change has its reason in a grave necessity. The change is required by my stolidity, my perverseness; if you please, say my blindness. Generally a great moral disorder cannot be

removed without the change. Here is the final cause of the change. That cause in its last issue is identical with human good in its highest and remotest reaches, and that issue itself has its ground in the unsearchable wisdom and measureless compassion of God. God from all eternity knowing that unity, when tempered by diversity, was the best course of mental and moral discipline for the human race, decreed the one and the other, and has brought them to pass, and ever will bring them to pass in such proportions as He and He alone knows to be best for the fulfilment of his own benevolent designs.

Is such a plan of action unworthy of God? Is it not rather of the nature of that perfection which our highest impulses lead us to ascribe to him? With God that course is the best which most easily and most effectually accomplishes the benign result He intends. If we may be taught by analogy, then such a method of instruction as is pursued by the best human teachers is the method which we should least hesitate to attribute to the one perfect teacher. Or, am I to have the license of exception with my pupil while it is denied to God? Is the employment of that liberty on fitting occasions to be commended in me and to be accounted either a reproach or an impossibility in God? Aye; all depends on men's conception of God. Many conceptions are gross and narrow, but surely none so gross and so narrow as that which denies to God the liberty, the spontaneity, the variety of action which we claim for men, which we find most in the noblest characters, and which, when at the best, are the highest of our human qualities, making us great in ourselves and benign in our influence on others, and illustrating the divinity which lies embedded in our nature.

The diversity which we have claimed as an associate for the uniformity in God's education of the human race, exists as an essential element in what may be termed the ordinary line of his operation with the sons of men, but exists there in comparatively small proportions. There are occasions when something on a grander scale is desirable. The want is met by the infinite goodness of Divine Providence. Great men are raised up to be the lights of the world. In number sufficient in the sight of God, they are too few to satisfy our desires. And here arises the real difficulty. It is that the exceptional on a grand scale is so small. Instead of one set of miracles, we, in our shortsightedness, should have expected a hundred. Accordingly there is no presumption against miracle; the presumption lies the other way rather. Only here it must be remembered that the exceptional loses its character by frequent repetition; and if the extraordinary has become ordinary, there is a power for good the less in the world. The due proportion of the two is in wiser hands than ours; there we devoutly leave it.

Jesus is an exceptional personage. He is indeed the one grand

historical exception. Compared with him ordinary men are pigmies, and great men small. An exceptional personage leads us to expect from him exceptional acts. Indeed, Jesus is exceptional, as by his exceptional virtues, so by his exceptional deeds. The two combine to form the real Christ, the Christ of history. Remove the one or the other, you not only mar but destroy the sublime image. As it is, the deed shows forth and exemplifies the virtue, and the virtue naturally produces the deed. The two act and re-act on each other, as the sun and the sun's rays, producing, by their joint operation on the beholder, an elevated sentiment replete with delight.

In such a ministration miracle is in its place, and there is a place for miracle. By its presence certain effects are produced which could not otherwise come to pass; nay, without it the ministration would lose its essential character. An exceptional personage, without exceptional deeds, is nearly, if not quite, a contradiction in terms. Certainly, if the removal of the exceptional destroys the Christ, the recognition of it is indispensable—unless we are prepared to disown the grand reality which not only shines forth from the pages of the New Testament, but has become the light and the life of the leading nations of the world.

ARE THE MIRACLES ASCRIBED TO CHRIST REALITIES?

But does this reality exist? If so the existence of miracle can no longer be denied. Miracle is bound up with the historical Christ in bonds that are indissoluble. Nor can you deny the one without disowning the other. Indeed, no other evidence is needed than the signal failure of the attempt made by Renan to sunder the two, retaining, as he assumes, "the Christ of history," while demolishing "the Christ of legend." The historical Christ which he leaves is not the Christ of history; it is a creature of his own hands and an image of his own philosophy.

A result so painful ought to suffice as a warning. Lay not iconoclastic hands on the Christ of God. You cannot mend what God has made perfect. As well attempt to improve the colours, hues, and tints of nature as to make Christ either more human or more divine by scientific manipulation.

"Prove the miracles," you say ("Les Apôtres": Introd., p. xlv.)

I accept the challenge. In part it has been already met. It is no mean evidence that miracle appears to be an essential element in the government of the living and true God. It is no mean evidence that miracle is in harmony with the great purposes of God in Christ, and forms an indispensable part of his character and his influence. In regard to Christ and Christianity, miracle is not a foreign element. It is homogeneous with both. As such it argues the same divine origin. If the imprint of God's hand is on the one, no less visible is it on the other. They both bear

the signatures of the Heavenly Father. Take an instance in the miracle at the Pool of Bethesda :—

The aged sufferer waited long
Upon Bethesda's brink ;
Till hopes, once rising warm and strong,
Began in fears to sink ;
And heavy were the sighs he drew,
And fervent was his prayer,
For he, with safety full in view,
Still languished helpless there.

His hope grew dim ; but one was nigh
Who saw the sufferer's grief ;
That gentle voice, that pitying eye
Gave promise of relief.
Each pang that human weakness knows
Obeyed that powerful word ;
He spake, and lo ! the sick arose,
Rejoicing in his Lord.

Father of Jesus, when oppressed
With grief and pain we lie,
And longing for thy heavenly rest,
Despair to look on high ;
Oh, may the Saviour's words of peace
Within the wounded heart,
Bid every doubt and suffering cease,
And strength and joy impart !

What is this but to say that there is a real, deep, and essential harmony between this miracle and the spirit of Jesus ! The harmony is too marked and prominent to be denied, Whence, then, can it have arisen but from the common source, Christ himself, and Christ's act in the particular case ? To suppose any other source is not to clear away your difficulty, but to double it by supposing another Christ. The spirit of Christ could be embodied in acts by no one except Christ himself. Our acts are but our spirit made visible, and every spirit has its own acts just as every seed has its own fruit. Consequently, as the conception of Christ held by inferior minds must be inferior to Christ himself, so must the impersonation of that conception in deed be inferior. The miracles of the Apocryphal Gospels attest these statements. While perusing them you feel yourself in another world, so unlike Christ are they, being superabundant, extravagant, trifling, even grotesque, and frequently in moral tone directly opposite to the ethics of the religion of Jesus. The reason is that they are spurious imitations of the originals made by poor artists. Similar faults would have appeared in the miracles of the Gospels had they been produced by fabricators posterior to the first age of the newly manifested life. It required even apostolic fidelity and rigour to record and report truly and exactly what Jesus said and did. To no inferior source can we refer the harmony there is between the spirit and the deeds of Christ. An inferior source

could have put forth nothing better than an inferior copy. As it is, the true image of Christ, who is the image of God, is reflected as much from the miracles as from the general tenor of his acts.

These general considerations might be followed up in particulars. Take the words of Christ and compare them with the miracles ascribed to him. The two are one in nature and effect. Witness the impression they produced. "Never man spake as this man," replied the officers of the Sanhedrim when asked why they had not apprehended Jesus as ordered to do. (John vii. 46.) After the same manner the cure of the demoniac recorded in Luke iv. 33 seq., occasioned amazement which has perpetuated itself in these terms: "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits and they come out." The cause of the sameness is found in the sameness of the source. What is the resurrection of Lazarus but an exemplification in act of the word "I am the resurrection and the life?" What the opening the eyes of the man born blind but saying in deed what is said in language: "I am the light of the world?" Had we space we should find little difficulty in placing by the side of each central characteristic word of Jesus some miraculous act strictly parallel therewith. As the tenor of his words was quickening, healing, restorative, and invigorating, such is also the tenor of his miracles. Manifestly the two are constituent parts of one whole; and as his miracles exemplify his words, so his words demand the illustrations furnished by his miracles. And the one is essential to the history no less than the other. We cannot part with the words without losing what we may term the body of Christ, nor can we part with his miracles without losing his spirit and life. If the former give the substance, the latter add the form and infuse the animation. It is its miracle which transforms Christ's ethics into Christ's religion. Hence its deep tints, glowing hues, picturesque forms, touching appeals, overpowering impressions—the attractive and imposing imagery which elevates Jesus of Nazareth into the Christ of God and the Saviour of men, and makes him dear and venerated alike to young and old, alike in the cottage and the palace, everywhere mighty in word because mighty in deed. (Luke xxiv. 19.)

If the miracles are divine no less than the words of Jesus, they prove themselves. Appealing to our sense of the divine, they claim and receive our glad homage as divine. Did you ever feel the divine yourself? Then, when it stands before you in some loving child, some self-denying sister, some saintly mother, some simple, tender, and religious narrative, you own it as real, and bless its beneficial influence on your heart. In a higher degree, and with intenser sympathy, independently of literary considerations, you own and revere the divine when you see Jesus take a little child in his arms and in softest accents pronounce a blessing on its head. Numerous are the incidents in the Gospels which

in the same manner carry you away captive by their simple loveliness and manifest divinity. Nor are you differently impressed when the narrative assumes an exceptional character. I will set in immediate contact two inimitable gems. The one is a word, the other a deed of Christ, and they both regard widows :—

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he said unto his disciples: This poor widow hath cast in more than all they, for they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even her living. (Matt. xii.)

THE WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON.

It came to pass that Jesus was going into a city called Nain, and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, lo! a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he went and touched the bier, and said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that had been dead began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother. (Luke vii.)

Now, if only you are free from impressions adverse to miracle, or if, for at least a moment, you can deliver yourself from that shadow, you will own reality as much in the narrative of the Widow of Nain's Son as in that of the Widow's Mite. Truthfulness is stamped on their substance. What simplicity, what beauty in both, and what deep, touching, considerate, and sympathising love. If the qualities which live, and will never cease to live, in these incidents are not divine, man has no sense of the divine, and religion is but "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Still, you argue, the incidents may never have taken place. They are poetic fictions. If so, they are more real than most of what men call history. But fictions they are not. Not thus do men feign. They are histories. They attest their own historic reality. Thus we speak, and thus we write when we are not imagining but acting, and acting in the midst of life's certainties and life's sufferings. It is only the pressures of reality that bring the heart out of men as the heart of Jesus is here brought out. You might as well tell me that the wail of my child in pain, or its shriek in peril, is a feigned utterance, as to ask me to believe that these records do not represent actual words and deeds.

CONTRAST FROM THE APOCRYPHAL MIRACLES.

It may serve to point the contrast between the genuine and the spurious if I add an instance or two from the apocryphal writings of the early church. The first, taken from the "History of Joseph the Carpenter," places the youthful Jesus by the corpse of his deceased father, speaking in these terms :—

"The odour of death shall not prevail in thee, and no worm shall come forth out of thy body. None of thy members shall be broken, nor a hair fall

from thy head, nor, my father Joseph, shall any portion of thy body perish, but it shall remain entire until the festival of the Millennium. O death, who destroyest all knowledge, and who callest forth so many tears and cries of grief, God, my Father, has granted thee that power. Men perish on account of the disobedience of Adam and of his wife, Eve. Adam not submitting to my Father's will, my Father was angry with him, and delivered him over to death. Thus death entered the world. If Adam had observed my Father's orders, death would have had no power over him. For this reason I too must die according to the flesh, not for what I have done, but that the human beings whom I have created may obtain pardon. Having said these words, I embraced my father Joseph's body and wept over him. Then those who were with me opened the door of the sepulchre, and laid his body by the side of his father James. And when he fell asleep he had completed his hundred and eleventh year; he never had the toothache, and his eyes preserved their sight; nor did his frame bend, nor his strength grow less; but he occupied himself with his business of a carpenter till the last day of his life."

The three ensuing examples are taken from the "Gospel of the Infancy" (of Jesus).

"Some men bore into the presence of Jesus a child on a bier. The child had, with his playfellows, been on the hills to get some wood, and having found a partridge's nest, he put his hand into it to take out the eggs. The hand was bitten by a serpent that lurked there. He shouted for his companions; they came and found him dead. The event reached the ears of members of his family, who hastened to the spot, and carrying him back to the town placed him before the Lord Jesus, who, sitting as a king on his throne, asked why they had brought the child. 'A serpent has bitten him,' they replied. 'Let us go and kill the serpent,' said Jesus. When they came near the serpent's hole Jesus commanded the serpent to come forth. He came forth. Then Jesus said, 'Go and suck out of the child's veins the poison thou hast infused into them.' The serpent obeyed. Then the Lord Jesus cursed him, and he forthwith burst and died. And the Lord Jesus touched the child with his hand, and he was healed. And as he began to weep, the Lord Jesus said to him, 'Cease thy tears, thou shalt be my disciple.' And that child was Simon the Canaanite."

"One day the Lord Jesus was with children who were playing on a (flat) roof, when one of them fell from the roof to the ground, and immediately expired. The rest made their escape, and the Lord Jesus remained alone. The parents of the dead child having come, said to Jesus, 'Thou hast thrown our son from the roof.' Jesus replied, 'Do not accuse me of a crime of which thou bringest no proof, but ask thy son himself how it came to pass.' Then the Lord Jesus went down, and placing himself near the head of the dead child, said with a loud voice, 'Zeinon, Zeinon, who threw thee from the roof?' The boy replied, 'Not thou; but another.' And the Lord having directed attention to the answer, all who were present praised God for the miracle."

"Another day, as the Lord Jesus was returning home in the evening with Joseph, a boy ran against him, and nearly knocked him down. Jesus said to that boy, 'As thou hast struck me, fall and rise no more.' That moment the boy fell on the earth and expired."

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST ATTESTED BY HISTORY, AND THEIR OWN INTRINSIC QUALITIES.

"But when," you ask, "were the evangelical records made?" To answer you in detail would occupy a long time. It suffices now to reply that they were made near enough to the events for all practical purposes. Beyond a doubt the three first Gospels contain a veritable outline of the public life of Christ. The

extremest negative criticism admits the fact. Jesus is an historical character. Many of his words and deeds stand recorded in the Gospels. The New Testament, in general, is an imperishable monument of his ministry and his influence, and such is the character of many of its narratives that they still bear traces, clear and indelible traces, of being the product of eye and ear witnesses. The two incidents I have just put before you are pictures taken on the spot; they are photograms secured and fixed at the instant when the events occurred. It is the existence in the New Testament of ever living realities like these that speak for the book in terms too simple, natural, and impressive to allow of doubt in the minds of most of its readers, creating for its contents not only credence, but reverent love and vivid admiration, and bowing the heart down in lowly and adoring gratitude to its divine source—the source of all their most cherished good.

You press the question “when were the records made?” The implication is, that the religious question depends on the literary one. This is a gross fallacy, prevalent though it is. The scholar’s argument and the popular or universal argument for the reality of the manifestation of God made in and by Jesus are two different things, suited to meet different conditions and wants of mind. The scholar’s argument is in essence scholarly. It is a literary question rather than a religious one. Were this path clear and smooth it would not itself lead to Christ. Nor is it a method which can create and justify reliance on him by the bulk of men. Can they understand and appreciate the vast and varied learning with which the literary theologian argues his points and establishes his conclusions? Take, for instance, the learning of a Lardner, even as condensed by a Paley, and try therewith to produce a just, solid, and independent conviction as to the authorship and reliableness of the first Gospel, or the first Epistle, in the mind of an intelligent class of Sunday-school teachers. You will fail. Who and what are your authorities? Eusebius, Justin Martyr, the Apostolical Fathers, you will tell them. Then it is on you they believe. And on whom do you rely? “On Lardner.” Yes, a solid foundation—but after all an outside authority to you, and one in respect of which you take, and must take, most things on trust. While thus devoid of certainty yourself, you cannot be the source of certainty to others. In simple truth, you have attempted to deal with artizans as if they were schoolmen. Not thus can that real, deep, and vital assurance be called forth which is indispensable in the Christian life, and without which our boasted Protestant right of private or individual judgment in religion is totally invalid. But, then, not thus did the Great Teacher deal with his pupils. Instead of undertaking to prove that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, he appealed to that prophetic element in the books generally ascribed to him, which, being essentially religious, spoke to the heart of all who heard him,

and still speaks to the heart of man, in favour of him who was at once the embodiment, the fulfilment, and the transmitter of the prophetic light and power of Israel, as enhanced, ennobled, and universalised in himself by the in-dwelling spirit of his Heavenly Father. Here, too, the teachers of religion cannot do better than follow Christ, who is not only the way into life, but the method according to which the path is to be trodden. And here, too, is one more illustration added to the thousands already accumulated, to the effect that God's ways are not only higher but better and more effectual than man's ways. (Is. lv., 8.) Ill indeed would it have been had the reasonable acceptance of Christianity been made to depend on the perpetually fluctuating basis of the learning of the schools. Had this been so Christianity must have long since perished, or taken refuge in the bosom of an infallible church—there to pine, become corrupt, and die. Far different, far wiser, far more benignant is the counsel of God, who, as He teaches his own existence in the solemnities of starry midnight, and the quickening and exhilarating radiance of midday, so likewise He instructs the world in righteousness, and fashions it gradually according to his own will, by a long succession of wise and good men, the wisest and the best of whom is Jesus of Nazareth, in whose words and deeds He has supplied his human children with the *pabulum vite*, the true bread and water of life. As the great masses of whom Protestant Christendom is made up study the Bible and become wise unto eternal salvation under the leadings of Divine Providence, so do you cease to be anxious about the ever-varying decisions of the scribes as to the authorship of the sacred books, and go to those books themselves, making them your study by night and your guide by day, and assuredly you will find the blessed life, and know of a truth that it is of God. Nor in doing so will you take for granted more than is taken for granted by scholars. They begin by accepting the books in general for what they profess to be, and out of the books they draw their most reliable considerations touching their authenticity and age. There is indeed one difference, and that one is in your favour: they study the books for logical argument and literary conclusions; you study them for spiritual light, power, and elevation. The former purpose is not the purpose of the books; the latter is. Consequently you approach them in a spirit more congenial with their own than is the spirit of literature. In other words, guided of God rather than of men, guided by your own purer instincts, desires, and yearnings, given you of God for your moral and spiritual direction, you are likely to profit by your studies, gaining the very edification the means and sources of which God has placed there; while this most learned Jew, or that most profound Hegelian philosopher, is likely only to get from the Scripture what he seeks there, namely, literary decisions and literary repute. I do not bid you turn a deaf ear to such

processes and results, but I do declare that you are not left of God to any thing so external and changeful. Between your own spirit and the spirit of the Bible God's own hands has established a deep, vitalising, and permanent harmony, and in the recognition of that harmony lie moral and spiritual certainty, revival, and perfection.

The happy experience that hence arises makes you feel that, like your sainted mother's love, the religion of Jesus is self-verifying. But the religion of Jesus, as we have seen, includes the illustrations in act of the spiritual life of its Founder. These also must stand or fall by their own characteristics.

As to the historical character of the Gospels, Renan himself shall yield a testimony, though its import may be qualified by words uttered in other parts.

"I admit the four Canonical Gospels as authentic. All of them in my judgment go back into the first century, and for the most part their contents are due to the authors to whom they are commonly ascribed; but their historical value is very diverse. Matthew deserves confidence in regard to what Jesus said. There you find the very notes taken from a clear and living remembrance of the teachings of Jesus. A kind of splendour at once mild and terrible, a divine force, if I may so speak, invests those utterances, detaches them from the context, and renders them easy of recognition to the critic. The real words of Jesus make themselves known, so to say, by their own act. The moment you touch them you feel them vibrate; they present themselves as if spontaneously, and of their own accord take their place in the narrative, where they stand out in bold and sharp relief."—(Introduction, xxvii., xxviii.) "La Vie": Introd., p. lxxxi., 13th ed.

And yet with such an admission the writer has produced the romance which he calls "The Life of Jesus." How slight then is literary fame in such an issue. Here is a man of undoubted ability, of general excellence of character, of great and varied scholarship, of very high culture, who yet makes Christ successively a charming doctor, a Galilean Apollo, a political communist, a determined revolutionist, an ill-humoured fanatic, and a dabbler in collusion and deceit. Why? Because he holds a philosophic theory which is thoroughly incompatible with the Christ of the New Testament and the Christ enthroned in the heart of the highest and best portions of the human race. What a pointed yet painful illustration of the perverting influence of philosophical theories.

THE MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIST COMPARED WITH THAT OF CHRIST SUPPORTS THE MIRACLES.

Passing now to a purely historical view of the subject, I wish to set before you what seems to me a strong presumption in favour of the reality of the miracles ascribed to Christ. It arises from the difference between the ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist, and the difference between the fate of the two. The latter appears as simply an ethical teacher. There is no sign or mention of

miracle in connection with him. In both the account of him given by Josephus and the account given by the evangelists he is represented as nothing more than a self-denying and bold preacher of righteousness. In a word, he is a second Nathan. Venturing to reprove Herod Antipas, he is apprehended, imprisoned, and beheaded. His cause declines, decays, comes to nought.

On the other side Jesus, at least equally self-denying and bold, teaches a religion the essence of which is God's love to man and man's duty to God. In addition he works miracles. His terrible rebukes occasion indignation and a thirst for revenge in the sacerdotal rulers of the land, who do their utmost to take him in their toils. After several failures they succeed, and put him to death. That success, which seems to be the utter defeat of the cause of Christ, is its stepping stone to the throne of temporal and eternal empire. Short has been Christ's earthly career, but longer than that of the Baptist, and long enough to gain such a hold on human hearts as to secure its final triumph.

Histories so similar, yet so dissimilar, must have been accompanied by corresponding diversities of influence. What in fact is the principal diversity? Jesus works miracles; John does not work miracles. How natural to see the cause of the different issue in that difference of influence. If this is allowed, then miracle on the part of Jesus was a reality—an important and indispensable reality. And in truth its admission seems to me absolutely requisite to make the history credible. Had Jesus not possessed some special and extraordinary means of moving and swaying men's hearts, he could not have evoked in his favour that popular enthusiasm which long stood as a wall of fire between himself and his active and embittered assailants. The exercise of his miraculous power in acts of public beneficence enabled him (so to speak) to get his foot firm on the soil, so as to secure such attention, and attention so long, as gave him opportunity to sow the seed of the word of the kingdom all over the land. But for that advantage the carpenter's son, the Nazarene peasant, the unbefriended moralist would, like John, have been put down a month or two after he began to utter his words, so unwelcome and so offensive to the authorities in church and state.

There exists a proof of the reality of miracles in the primitive church which ought to be decisive. Suppose that at this moment, when the point is so much disputed, a new and reliable witness were to rise before us, and give his evidence to the following effect:—

CONTEMPORANEOUS ATTESTATION OF THE MIRACLES.

"I was contemporary with Jesus of Nazareth, and one of the bitterest enemies of his church. After doing my utmost to crush the infant community, I was compelled, by evidence, to become one of its adherents a short time after the death of its founder. In this new, and to me disadvantageous con-

dition, I studied the whole movement with the greatest care, and eventually gave up no ordinary prospects in social life in order to consecrate myself to the propagation of the new religion. On its behalf I now appear before you, and in regard to the denials now current, I declare that true and genuine miracles were wrought from the beginning of the ministry of Jesus down to the end of my own life, the power first exercised by Jesus remaining in the church, and becoming one of the regular and ordinary gifts bestowed of the Spirit of God on the faithful disciples of his Son. In order that you may feel the more assured that I speak the truth, I beg you to give special attention to what I am about to say, for this is not the first time that I have borne the same testimony. The first quarter of a century after the death of Christ was drawing to a close when, being in the city of Ephesus, I heard that the church I had founded in the city of Corinth was disturbed by grave disorders. The city was in ordinary times filled with disputants of all kinds, and the introduction of the Gospel added fuel to the flames. Among the points in discussion were, 'The special gifts which had been bestowed of God on the followers of his Son.' They were misunderstood, they were misused, they were even denied. The peril was great. The infant church was yet too weak to bear such a convulsion, and if it were to sink in so brilliant a centre of Greek culture, it would scarcely be able to maintain itself any where else. In this emergency I carefully considered what step I ought to take. Then I resolved to make a simple statement of fact, and to leave the statement, with its necessary implications, to speak for itself. In effect then I declared touching this point that there were then, and had been from the first, extraordinary powers in the Church of Christ. These powers were of two kinds—one bore the name of gifts of healing, the other gifts of miracles. The first cured diseases in men, the second wrought powerful effects on external nature. Both were of God. In both the Spirit of God was the sole proper agent. And here the two were broadly contrasted with the lying wonders of heathenism—such as those which were attempted by Simon Magus. Indeed, the two were the natural result of the active influence of the Spirit of God in the human soul, brought into most close and vivid union with its almighty source through 'faith working by love.' A similar state of the human soul in your own days will occasion a similar outpouring of the Spirit of God, and lead to a renewal and exercise of the same mighty and benignant operations. But even as the Great Master himself, while on earth, could work no miracle in certain places because of the prevalent unbelief of their natives (Matt. xiii. 58, xvii. 20.), so you now absorbed and distracted by debate, distressed and chilled by doubt, and materialised by disbelief, are weak and sickly, 'fast nigh unto death.' Your sole resource and hope is to cease from disputation, to look for light into a realm higher than philosophy, and to concentrate the energies of your nature on works of piety and love. Then your spirit will be kindled within you, and, no longer needing confirmation, you will give testimony to the Christ of the New Testament with great power and with gladness of heart."

The speaker is the Apostle Paul. The evidence he has just uttered he originally gave with his own living tongue. In substance it may be found in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, the twelfth chapter; the whole of which should be read, and special note taken of verses 9, 10, 28. In another epistle, written about the same time to the Galatian Christians, the apostle bore similar testimony (Gal. iii., 5, 6). Let it further be observed that the Letters we now call to our aid are universally admitted to have proceeded from Paul (Comp. 2 Cor. xii., 12).

A bolder challenge was never made; nor, to all appearance, a more effectual one. In the Church at Corinth there were persons who denied not only the resurrection of Christ, but generally all life beyond the tomb. Not then in a credulous atmosphere was

this great question agitated. The Apostle was surrounded as by Greek disputants, so by Greek sceptics. The very condition of things seems almost to have existed which Renan demands as forming the proper court of appeal in the case of *Science versus Miracle*. And what was the result? The Second Epistle, showing the effect of the first, answers the question. The opponents, if not convinced, were silenced. Moreover, the faith of the Church was confirmed and settled on a permanent basis, for Corinth became the most brilliant star in the firmament of Hellenic Christianity. Indeed, it is to the great and permanent position the city took and held in the new order of civilisation introduced by Christ that we owe the preservation of this short and perishable product of Paul's faith, fidelity, and earnestness. Extraordinary was that power which prevented a sheet or two of parchment from perishing at the very first, because it bore traces of certain Greek characters, and, continuing its conservative agency, has transmitted the same down to the present hour, when no longer is it exposed to peril. This, however, is but one of a rich and varied cluster of moral, social, religious, and intellectual influences, of the highest and most beneficial kind, which have flowed, and which still continue to flow, from Paul's preaching in general, nor least from the influence he exercised over Corinthian faith and Corinthian scepticism. Such good fruits betoken a good, sound, and vigorous tree; nor shall we be willing to refer them to the corrupt tree of legend until legend be proved, at least in one similar instance, to have produced similar effects. In comparison with this result it is idle to speak of even the least tainted products of the cloister and the cell.

NON-CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES TO THE MIRACLES.

It may not be useless to look around the world in the first century of our era in order to ascertain what impression of itself was made by this publication of the kingdom of God. Had it been a purely ethical endeavour it would have left, if any, a purely ethical trace. Had it been legendary the stamp of legend would have been too broad and deep to be denied. Equally had it been simply philosophic or simply Judaic, corresponding traces would have appeared. Analogy then justifies the conclusion that if a supernatural halo appears around the religion of Christ in the earliest notices of it found in contemporary literature, it was not merely ethical nor philosophic, but had miracle for one of its essential features.

The historical notices left of Christianity in non-Christian writers of the same, or nearly the same time, are few and scanty, for the religion that was to subdue and rule the world "grew up as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground." (Is. liii.)

The earliest of these notices is founded in the Antiquities of the Jews (xviii. 3, 3). The passage has been rejected, either in part

or altogether, being thought too favourable to spring from any other than an over-zealous Christian. Yet German criticism has long been tending in favour of its authenticity, and Renan distinctly says :—

“I believe the passage regarding Jesus authentic in general. It is completely in the taste of Josephus, and if that historian did mention Jesus it is certainly in this way he must have spoken ; only one feels that a Christian hand has re-touched the passage, by adding words without which it would have been almost blasphemous.” (“La Vie,” Introd., p. xl ; 13th ed.)

The words follow :—

“At that time (in the days of Pilate) lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man, for he performed extraordinary works, and was a teacher of such men as received truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, condemned him to the cross, they who before had loved him did not cease to do so ; for on the third day he appeared to them alive again, the divine prophets having foretold these and many other wonderful things concerning him ; and to this day the sect of the Christians named after him has not ceased to exist.”

A Christian hand, says Renan, modified these words by the introduction of the phrase, “if he may be called a man,” and by changing the original “This was called the Christ,” into “This was the Christ.” The reason assigned for the alterations is that without them “the passage would have been almost blasphemous.” In whose eyes? Of course in those of the corrupters of the text. But it was not their utterance, and they had no reason to be concerned about its theological tone, since it came from one who was a Jew, if not also an enemy. And surely it required little reflection on their part to see that the less the passage spoke in a Christian sense, the stronger the testimony it bore to Christ. To make the non-Christian testimony speak Christianly was to deprive the testimony of its value. This consideration makes against the second supposed change, and the worst the Christian revisers could do for their cause was to substitute *was* for “was said to be.” In using the positive *was* the historian may be understood as reporting the opinion prevalent among his Christian contemporaries.

The alleged tampering with the text then receives no support from the alleged reasons. Indeed, had the corrupter or corrupters been so foolish as to be blind to the undesirableness of making Josephus into a Christian, and had they wished to avoid the colour of blasphemy, they would have been more liberal in their changes, and made the Christian hue much deeper and fuller than at the most it can now be said to be. The doctrine of the day, touching the superhuman dignity of Jesus, would undoubtedly have been introduced. The tone of the passage as it stands has the calmness and sobriety of simple history, the historian being a Jew, a Jew reporting not his own belief, but the

facts as they were in themselves and as they were conceived of among the Christians.

However, the supposed revision leaves untouched the bearing which I recognise in the passage and wish to lay before the reader. Beyond a question the impression which Josephus had of Christ was that he was held to have done extraordinary and wonderful things. Moreover, Jesus was believed to have been seen alive again after his death. The works ascribed to him had two qualities; they were exceptional, paradoxical, it is in the Greek, that is, contrary to what you would expect, judging from what you ordinarily see and know, thus substantially agreeing with the view of miracle which I have advanced and illustrated. Thus, abnormal in themselves, they excited wonder in the beholders. With similar simplicity the writer seizes and puts forth the essential element of what is commonly called the resurrection of Christ, namely, that having been crucified he lived again, being seen of certain disciples. The testimony here given coincides exactly with that which Paul bears in Romans xiv., 9: "To this end Christ *both died and lived again* (Tischendorf's reading) that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living." Nor do I think I strain the sense when I say that the historian deduces the continuance of Christianity down to his own day from the fact that its founder lived again after dying on the cross.

The extreme point of the period I have termed "his own day" it is not easy to determine. Dr. Lardner dates the testimony of Josephus at A.D. 76. Josephus was born in Jerusalem, of a sacerdotal family, in the year 37 A.D., and is known to have been alive in the year 103 A.D. His life thus covers the whole apostolic and post-apostolic period. The work in which our passage occurs, namely, his "Jewish Archæology," brings down the history of the Hebrew nation from the creation to the twelfth year of Nero's reign, that is sixty-six years after the birth of our Lord, and was published in A.D. 94. The several dates illustrate the importance of this testimony. When the historian was a child and a boy Christianity was fighting for a foothold on the soil of Judea, yet fighting so bravely and so successfully as to command attention from the great families of Jerusalem, to one of which Josephus belonged. As he grew into manhood, he would doubtless hear "this thing," which "was not done in a corner" (Acts xxvi., 26), and which at the time was seriously occupying the attention of the princes as well as the lawyers and priests of the land, spoken of in his own home, and in other cultivated circles. With increasing years he could not fail to gain increasing knowledge of the new religion, especially as during some time he held a high military command in Galilee. Thus situated in respect of the rising faith, he was at least equal to writing the passage under our notice, and not impossibly may have indulged secret leanings toward Christianity. Had he pos-

sessed high moral courage he might have used words of a fuller Christian tone. The lack of emphasis in them is, however, well made up by its leaving us at liberty to cite his words among our non-Christian testimonies.

The view taken of Christianity among the higher classes of the Roman masters of the world finds utterance in the biographer Suetonius, who, in his life of Nero, (whose reign began in A.D. 54, and ended in A.D. 68), says "The Christians were punished; a sort of men of a new and magical superstition." Two stings on Christianity were intended in these words. First, it was new; and, secondly, it was magical. The implied impeachments had peculiar force in a state of society in which "new," when applied to religion, was nearly equivalent to false, and "magical" was a brand inflicted by a sceptical age exasperated by low and gross forms of religion coming to Rome from many quarters, especially the East. The evil impression was intensified by the term superstition, which, as selected in contrast to religion, implied senseless practices, or thaumaturgical acts, sometimes both.

Other instances of the application in these early days of the epithet superstitious to the religion of Jesus might be given, but for the sake of brevity I confine myself, so far as Paganism is concerned, to an extract from the annals of the historian Tacitus (born A.D. 61). I here cite from "the learned and impartial Lardner." (Works, vol. vi., p. 628.)

"After a description of the terrible fire at Rome, in the tenth of Nero and the sixty-fourth of our Lord, in which a large part of the city was consumed, Tacitus adds :—' But neither all human help, nor the liberality of the Emperor, nor all the atonements presented to the gods, availed to abate the infamy he lay under of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To suppress, therefore, this common rumour, Nero procured others to be accused, and inflicted exquisite punishment upon those people who were in abhorrence for their crimes, and were commonly known by the name of Christians. They had their denomination from Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious (or magical) superstition, though checked for a while, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, the source of this evil, but reached the city (of Rome) also; whither flow from all quarters all things vile and shameful, and where they find shelter and encouragement. At first they only were apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a vast multitude, discovered by them; all which were condemned, not so much for the crime of burning the city as for their enmity to mankind. Their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt. Some were covered over with the skins of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; others, having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night time, and thus burned to death. Nero made use of his own gardens as a theatre upon this occasion, and also exhibited the diversions of the circus, sometimes standing in the crowd as a spectator, at other times driving a chariot himself, till at length these men, though really criminal and deserving exemplary punishment, began to be commiserated, as people who were destroyed not out of regard to the public welfare, but only to gratify the cruelty of one man.' "

He who wrote this graphic account was evidently no friend to Christ or Christianity.

I have quoted the passage in full because of its historical importance. Here is a distinct and unquestionable account of the origin and spread of the religion of Jesus during the generation that followed the crucifixion of Christ. The account agrees in particulars and in general implication and bearing with that which our Gospels present. Doubt here is then out of the question. Such was the origin and such the rapid spread of the new religion.

Such too were the fearful trials it had at the very first to endure. And who were those who perished in that truculent slaughter? They were all but exclusively persons of the humbler ranks. Whence then that manly firmness which remained undaunted even in fear of Nero's atrocious cruelties? Did they perish without knowing in what and in whom they had believed? Was it likely that so large a number of persons could have been brought over to a cause, the espousal of which entailed contempt and deadly peril, thus early and at this distance from Calvary, by body-stealers who knew the deceit they had practised, and knew the acquiescence in a similar fraud (the resurrection of Lazarus) of the originator of that compound of folly and fraud which they offered as a new religion to the world—was all this likely? Or rather does not this imply a breach of the laws which govern human nature at least equally miraculous with that by which, in the views of some, the laws which govern the universe were broken at the word of Jesus? And does the series of natural realities, which the concise and graphic pen of Tacitus has left for the instruction of all ages, bear any trace of legend, fable, illusion, or other falsities? Yet all this, and all of a similar kind, nay all Christianity sprang from the rank and diseased imagination of Mary of Magdala, who took the films of her own fancy for the crucified and risen Jesus—at least, so says Renan.

While the "magical superstition" was undergoing this inhuman treatment and winning for itself a crown of unfading glory, and while probably the apostle Paul suffered martyrdom in those disgraceful fires, the other chief Christian missionaries were devotedly at work in various parts of the civilised world proclaiming the kingdom of God, and preparing the advent of such a state of prosperity as is implied in the following description—this, too, we owe to the sufferings of the primitive martyrs—presented in a letter addressed by Pliny the younger to the Emperor Trajan, and written in the year A.D. 107 :—

"Pliny to the Emperor Trajan wisheth health and happiness.

"It is my constant custom, sir, to refer myself to you in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of Christians; so that I know not well what is the subject matter of punishment, or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full-grown

and robust, ought to be treated all alike: whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians ought to be punished, though they are now no longer so; whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.

"In the meantime I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me and have been accused as Christians. I have put the question to them whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted I ordered away to be punished; for it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others of the same infatuation, whom, because they are Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city.

"In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under persecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me, without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who, upon examination, denied that they were Christians, or had ever been so: who repeated after me an invocation of the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which for that purpose I have caused to be brought and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover, they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians can by any means be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought proper to discharge.

"Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves Christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said they had been Christians, but had left them; some three years ago, some longer, and one, or more, above twenty years. They all worshipped your image, and the statues of the gods; these also reviled Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their fault, or error, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a god, and bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to return it. When these things were performed it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder: but this they had forborne since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.

"After receiving this account I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were called ministers. But I have discovered nothing beside a bad and excessive superstition.

"Suspending, therefore, all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice: for it has appeared unto me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims likewise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine what numbers of men might be reclaimed if pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

Such was the state of Christianity in Asia Minor at the end and the beginning of the second century. Such was the growth and such the fruit of that grain of mustard seed which was put into the ground when Jesus and his apostles eat their last meal together in that small and unadorned upper room in Jerusalem, the use of

which they owed to some good natured proprietor. I will not stop to aid the reader in realising the several facts which the account contains, showing the wide diffusion of the Gospel at the time, or those which quietly manifest the strength of the sufferers' endurance. But I will ask special attention to one or two important circumstances. Some of the accused, it appears, had left the Christian body as much as twenty years. How long they had remained in it is not stated. Some space of time their discipleship must have covered. The consequent date takes us back to proximity with the events reported in the narrative of Tacitus. It follows that Josephus, Tacitus, and Pliny, three non-Christian authorities of a very high order, supply an outline history of the rise and progress of our religion in substance identical with what may be read in the writings of the New Testament and other works of Christian origin. Who then can question either the historical character of Christianity itself, or of the archives of Christianity? Yet, while the history is thus put beyond a question, an element is discovered in both of a special kind. The supernatural, which appears in the Gospels in a certain degree of fulness, appears also in the non-Christian records, if in a very subdued form, yet still in clear and distinct implication. But one thing ascribed to the former does not appear in the latter—namely, legend. There is not the faintest indication of the undue play of the imagination in Pliny's report to his imperial master. On the contrary, all there is but too stern reality. Innocent, virtuous, simple-minded, as well as heroic, were those persecuted men, women, and children. I look with special reverence on those "two maid servants which were called ministers," that is, deaconesses, whom even Pliny subjected to examination with torture, but from whom he failed to extort anything worse than what he terms "a bad and excessive superstition." Brave hearts! they endured that wrack while repeating their trust in a risen and ever-living Saviour.

Finally, here is the character of these primitive Christians as reported by their socially eminent persecutor:—Accused and put in peril of their lives solely on the ground of being disciples of Christ, they (for the most part) remained "faithful unto death," expecting the "crown of life," of which they had received the promise from that dear and revered Master (Rev. ii, 10) who had said, "Fear not, I am he that was dead, and lo, I live for evermore, and have the keys of death and the grave." (Rev. i, 17.) They affirmed that this was the sum total of their fault or error, that they were accustomed to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves in responses a hymn to Christ as divine, and bind themselves by an oath to what? to the commission of some wickedness? No. To thief, to rob, to commit adultery? No; but never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to

return it. When the service was over they separated, and then came together again to a meal which they ate in common, without any disorder.

Yes, here is the natural outcome of the teachings, spirit, and love of Christ. How pure, how lofty, how self-denying. This church, in some remote cavern in Bithynia, is a model which might be most advantageously followed in our own days: Its religion was a power over the life for practical good. The conversion of its members was the moral and religious renewal of their character.

Are these results those you would expect from a system of dreams, fancies, illusions, and frauds, such as was the religion of Jesus as interpreted by Renan?

The description contains two views of the daily life of the Bithynian Christians. One denies the imputations of their accusers, and the other simply states the virtues which they cultivated.

Nor was theirs a bare morality. No bare morality could have endured so fiery a trial. They met for common prayer, and they made a sacrifice in order not to fail in duty and not to forego a great and precious privilege. Would that their practice were ours!

Nor must I pass unnoticed the fact that it was on "a stated day" they assembled. What day was this? "The first day of the week," on which the church of Corinth were wont to meet together. (1 Cor. xvi., 2.) For what purpose? The purpose was the same in both cases—viz., to eat a meal in common. That meal was what we term the Lord's Supper. And so we find here, too, the cardinal facts of Christianity, namely, the death and the resurrection of Christ. (1 Cor. xi., 20 seq.) That meal commemorated his death; that stated day commemorated his resurrection. As it was then so had it been for some half century, so is it now, and so will it remain to the ages of ages and beyond. Our Sunday and our Communion peal through the centuries the two grand and central facts: CHRIST DIED, CHRIST LIVED AGAIN. Those facts are the pillars of the church, and against them the powers of darkness will never be able to prevail.

It would here be not improper to continue the line of illustrations by which I intend to show how deep a groove the resurrection of our Lord cut and left in the highways of his church, thus attesting its reality in a way alike unmistakeable and decisive. But I reserve the links that are to come for the part where I speak of the attempt made by our critic to turn the faith of Christ's resurrection into illusion, collusion, and delusion.

Not without spiritual no less than intellectual profit may the reader here peruse the first Epistle of Peter, addressed, among others, to the persons with whom Pliny had to do. It is the production of one who had seen and heard the whole of the

sublime drama of the life, death, and revival of Christ. In it the true spirit of that divine manifestation shines out with a pure, tranquil, and sacred radiance. In it are seen the sources of the moral integrity and strength to which Pliny bears unsympathising testimony. And from it have thousands, during eighteen hundred years, learnt from their own individual experience that the Gospel is not a compound of ordinary facts and extraordinary legends, but a spirit of divine power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Tim. i., 7.)

Numerous clear traces of the miraculous action of Jesus and his apostles are found in the treatise written by the learned Origen against the philosopher Celsus at the beginning of the third century. Dr. Lardner hesitates to pronounce whether Celsus admitted the facts as miracles or not (vol. vii., p. 231). The position we are illustrating leaves the question undecided. It is the impression that the religion of Jesus made in the earlier days of its publication that we are looking after, and on this point the objections of the philosopher and the replies of the divine come not into play. The impression was that of a religion accompanied by miracle. I content myself with the following citation of Origen's own words:—

“We say then that the virtue and power of Jesus has made itself known all over the civilised world, where are spread the churches of God which he has formed, after having rescued their members from an unlimited number of disorders and vices. The name of Jesus solaces even those whose spirit is troubled; it expels the demons; it heals the sick. In a word, there is nothing so admirable as the moderation, the restraint, the sweetness, the goodness, the humanity which his doctrine produces in those who are not satisfied with making a feigned profession of it, but believe sincerely what it teaches touching God, Christ, and judgment to come. Celsus foreseeing that we should not fail to allege in favour of Jesus the great miracles which he did, concedes to us by supposition that there is nothing but what is true in the narratives of the sick persons healed by Jesus, of the little bread with which he fed great crowds, and in the other things, which, he says, were done by magic. You see that in speaking thus he in some way admits the power of magic. Some reason for the assumption there might have been had Jesus made a vain parade of his miracles, like the wonder-workers of to-day, for they in all they do make it not their object to lead their spectators and admirers to change their bad habits and to fear God, or to persuade them to regulate their lives by the laws of him who is their judge. They do not wish to take the trouble of correcting others, nor, indeed, are they able to do so, being vicious themselves. But as to Jesus, who did nothing extraordinary except with a view to reform those who saw his miracles, can anyone deny that he gave in his own person the example of a perfect life, to those his first disciples who are strictly so called, as well as to all others, in order that they might be in a condition to teach men the will of God; and that the last, learning from their teachers how to live holily more by the excellence of the doctrine and by the beauty of the examples than by the splendour of the miracles, might set before themselves the one single object of pleasing God in all things. If, then, the life of Jesus was of this character, how can he be compared with magicians?”—(Book i.)

Little reliable information respecting Jesus and his religion can be gathered from the heterogeneous Jewish writings, which, in

substance, extend from a century or two before Christ down to some centuries after him. So far as they depart from the policy of silence they pursue an adverse tone, yet are they not able to conceal the spirit of miracle stamped originally on the life of Christ by the hand of God. The temper of these documents may be inferred from the fact that they change the name of Jesus (Saviour) into that of Jeshu, *the God-forsaken*. Often they speak of him under the disrespectful terms of "The Man," "The Fool," "The Nameless Person." And what is said of him is mostly the result of unintelligence or malice. Moreover, it abounds in contradictions. In general tenor it is the story (as old as Celsus, who was not ashamed to profit by these Jewish falsities), how that Jesus being for his folly dismissed by Rabbi Joshua, his teacher, fled into Egypt, where he became initiated in magical arts, the secret of which he brought back on his return into Judea hidden in an incision made in his body. Thus prepared, he set up for a thaumaturge, and seduced many to idolatry. Wondrous works done in the name of Jesus are often mentioned, but a true disciple of the Rabbins would rather die than suffer himself to be healed by the irreligious forces. Finally, seized by the authorities, Jesus was stoned to death and then hanged, being, moreover, condemned by sacerdotal hate to everlasting fire. These and similar calumnies came down into the middle ages, and found utterance in compositions, some of which are still extant.

The more offensive such a witness, the less suspicious is he when he reports his own impression and the general impression of his race regarding miracle in Christianity. The mark appears to have been indelible.

I have put together several indications of the impression made by Jesus and his religion beyond the boundaries of the church down through the period which begins with the middle of the first century and ends with the middle of the third. The witnesses called into court are persons of no ordinary distinction. Three are among the greatest historians of the ancient world:—Josephus, Suetonius, Tacitus. Pliny held the highest offices in religious and state affairs that could be held by a Roman subject. If learning and scholastic subtlety are titles to confidence, the authors of the Talmud deserve attention. And what is the result touching the point at issue? It is that Christianity at its first publication, and long after, bore in the eyes of men a miraculous aspect. Hence arises a strong presumption that miracle, or what was thought miracle, was connected with it. A bare system of morality, a school of speculation, an expansion of Essenism, could not have produced such a result. Had the Baptist been successful he would have appeared to the eye of Roman civilisation as nothing more than an ascetic preacher of repentance. But no sooner is Jesus seen on the area of the world than his head appears environed with a superhuman glory. Christ and miracle

are linked together in the history of our race. How intimately they were united, and how much the latter was considered essential to the former, may be learnt in the "False Christ," Apollonius of Tyana, whom paganism put forward in the third century as a competitor with the Christ of God. In sustaining that character he is made to imitate his original. Miracle forms a special feature. But what miracle! The contrast—how much is it to the honour of Christianity! The base metal is base indeed. Yet paganism did its best in the supernatural as in the natural sphere. Morally, Apollonius is a pagan sage, for the portrait was a serious attempt at a pagan moral reform. The result was a failure, offering in almost every way the most marked contrast between the divine original and the Pythagorean imitation. The fact may be shown in a few sentences uttered by Dr. Réville ("Revue des Deux Mondes," 1st October, 1865):—

"What a strange person and how often is he ridiculous. The regenerator of a religion which he declares corrupted by folly and ignorance, he is superstitious to the last degree. He believes in omens and witchcraft, in elephants which hurl javelins in battle, in a stone which eagles put into their nests to keep away serpents, in talismans, and I know not what. I might fill pages with follies of all kinds which he utters with the gravity of a revealer. If his disciples admire him, their admiration certainly does not exceed that which he loudly professes for himself. At every instant he assumes an intolerable position; he is strained, full of mannerism, artificial from head to foot. He sets himself off on every opportunity. His warfare swarms with bravado. He is the Don Quixote of moral and religious perfection."

This is what paganism produced as a rival with Jesus. What a caricature the Talmud created we have already seen. No artist can excel himself, and had Jesus been the child of the age of the Herods, he would have had features very unlike his own. Then what would be our present social condition? We answer in the eloquent words of the high authority we have just quoted:—

"This manner of conceiving the reformation of paganism was dictated by necessity; but what a succession of checks and miscarriages! What feebleness in the issues, if you compare them with the greatness of the enterprise! And what then would our western world have been, had not Christianity baptised it with a new spirit, had not animated it with a new life? And though the invasion of the barbarians complicates the question, it may nevertheless be resolved by this alternative; either the barbarism would have remained incurable, and the brilliant Greco-Roman civilisation would have had no heir, or, sometime or other, a gross copy of the ancient social world would have made its appearance. Anyway, in this last case it is easy to foresee the kind of civilisation we should now have reached. China supplies the type."

If the reader will review the foregoing historical outline, he will probably conclude that beyond its own boundaries the religion of Jesus was at the first accounted a religion attended by miracles. I do not mean that the pagans believed the acts thus qualified to be divine in their origin. Pretensions, with which the wonderful works of Christ might be identified by superficial minds, were not uncommon. Those works might easily pass without calling forth

a discriminative judgment as to their real character. Still, there they were : deeds known and admitted as extraordinary, and, it may be, classed with the magical acts then accounted not a little prevalent. With this indifference, or this opinion, we have nothing to do. We mark simply the impression of miracle as derived from Christianity. The impression was in part a distinctive one. Josephus speaks less briefly of John the Baptist than he does of Jesus, yet without ascribing miracles to the former. Here is a broad difference. Nevertheless, both are religious founders of the same country and age.

Now, if we look back to our Gospels, we find a distinctive cause for this distinctive impression. If the miracles ascribed to Jesus were real, this is just what we should expect, and it is not easy to see how this impression, and particularly how this distinctive impression, could have arisen, but from the actual existence of the facts in question. Admit those wonderful works on the part of Jesus, and consider the Baptist as simply a moral reformer, and you have a cause correspondent to the effect. Deny the works, and you will find it difficult, in fact impossible, to account for the impression. Renan's legendary theory on this matter will be considered hereafter.

The foregoing receives confirmation from the circumstance that Celsus explains the miracles away by ascribing them to magic. As he himself did not believe in magic, the allegation was as good as an admission of his inability to find an adequate explanation. And so we are brought to this important fact, namely, that the first assailants of Christianity did not pretend to deny or disprove the miracles of Jesus *simpliciter*. Yet there, in the Gospels, there, ere the first century was at an end, the claim of miraculous attestations lay before the world, challenging investigation, and defying denial. Celsus and other early antagonists take infinite pains to destroy the infant religion. The force of calumny, always the readiest weapon, and often the most effectual, was made to do its worst. Yet no impeachment of the reality of miracle. Why did not the Jewish Sanhedrim institute a legal inquiry touching the resurrection of Jesus? Fatal to the rising religion would a trustworthy verdict of *Not risen* have been, especially if accompanied by either—*His disciples stole the body*; or, *He is still alive*. And why did not Pliny search the whole matter to the bottom? Here was a man of the world, and a great statesman, embarrassed with a new religion of such social importance as to lead him to Cæsar for specific advice and direction. A clear necessity for a judicial investigation. The pro-consul appears to have made inquiry. Doubtless it was not superficial. Not less certain is it that he discovered no fraud. Yet he must, in these investigations, have heard much about this Christ whom the Christians celebrated in their worship. Could his alleged revival after death have escaped his notice? No; that was the centre, the source, and

the support of the whole matter. This Pliny must have known. He either did or did not carefully test the allegation. If he did not, he neglected his duty; if he did, he either found it to be false or true. Say false; then he proclaims it false, he reports it false, he tells his imperial master it is false, and thus effectually explodes the bubble. No such verdict is found in existence, and the new religion was not put down. Pliny's investigations, then, yielded him no ground for pronouncing the resurrection a fiction or a fancy, and gave him no resources for suppressing Christianity. His letter lies before the world, an unquestionable proof that his inquiries, whatever they were, did not detect in the troublesome sect anything dishonest, any false claim, any pretended miracle. This amounts to a verdict of—*Not proven*; if not, of—*Innocent of the charge of vamping up claims to miraculous power*.

Finally, a word of caution. Be not carried away by an impression. A sort of anti-miracle fervour is now the fashion. Originating in the negative philosophies of the continent, the current has been fed by the materialistic tendencies of the day, until it is so swollen and so forcible as to bear down ordinary opposition. Vituperative language has come to add to the impulse. Reason and fact are thus in peril of being overborne. Those who stand firm against argument give way rather than be thought, if not called, obstructives, old-fashioned, and perhaps doating. Nevertheless, all improper influences of the kind ought to be withstood; if needful, sternly withstood. The question at issue is too grave a one to be allowed to be dealt with by alien forces. It is a question of fact, and, if you will, of philosophy, and as such let it go before the judge, and as such only.

And see to it that the judge is impartial. If he is prejudiced, if he is known to have pronounced an adverse judgment already, take exception to the tribunal. Moreover, in your endeavours to obtain a fair hearing, be not deluded by a claim of infallibility. A new pope has come forward and demands unqualified homage. His name is Science. It is a wide and vague term, and before you accept his authority, carefully consider his claim, and the basis of his claim. There are many sciences, but "Science" in the abstract is a figment of some ardent brain. The several sciences vary in their subjects, their methods, their results, and their authority. These numerous diversities can hardly coalesce in one solid and invariable concrete of infallibility. In consequence this new pope looks very like a pretender. In serious truth, there is no such authority, no such tribunal, no such Supreme Sovereign as "Science." Often, as in the case of Renan, "Science" means nothing more than an individual opinion. Now, individual opinions are a legion, and a legion are they of not only diverse, but often conflicting, and not seldom mutually destructive forces. Indeed, of all hostile elements, none are more hostile than successive or contemporaneous philosophies. A certain unity may

be found in each following master, but their several disciples never fail to "fall out by the way." Hegel himself may still retain some authority, but the Hegelians have gone far to destroy it, bit by bit, without succeeding in getting sufficient capital for business on their own account in any case. Theological divergencies are too wide and numerous, and theological disputes too bitter ; but at least, at this time of day, they will bear comparison with those of our materialistic physiologists and philosophers. I make the remark with no sense of satisfaction, but rather with sorrow and regret. When, however, Science so far forgets itself as to use swelling words of vanity it must be bidden to study its own intrinsic value. How far from infallible the critic with whom we have to do is, may be inferred from one of his self-contradictions. Can anyone who has perused the three foregoing chapters doubt that he is a dexterous and persistent assailant of the supernatural ? Yet, in the preface to his " Etudes," p. xi., we read as follows :—

" Once for all, I protest against the false interpretation that would be given to my labours, if they were taken as works of controversy. Controversy requires strategical skill, to which I am a stranger. Such is not my method. *The fundamental question on which all religious discussion must turn, that is, the fact of revelation and the supernatural, I never touch.*"

The origin of the broad contrast which hence arises I attempt not to explain. Its existence should beget modesty on the part of its author.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF MAN IN CONTRAST WITH THAT OF RENAN.

"**T**HE proper study of mankind is man." The fact is correct, if only because self-knowledge is the ground of all other knowledge. Until I know myself I cannot know anything else, since all else must depend for its truth and certainty on the qualities of the being by whom they are apprehended and seen. The sun shines at midday, and I think I see a body that men agree to call the sun. But is the sun a reality or an ocular deception? And if a reality, are its qualities rightly perceived by myself? I am not about to enter into the theory of vision, but simply wish to indicate that unless I believe in myself I have no ground for believing in anything. Self-belief, then, underlies all human knowledge. If the reports made by myself to myself are unreliable, or uncertain, the same qualities must attach to every other report. An exact image of a body cannot be received through an opaque, a dim, or a broken medium.

This first principle of knowledge is recognised as such in the sacred Scripture. The idea of a revelation includes it. So does the idea of instruction. Neither God nor any other teacher can teach an unintelligent being, nor a being who questions the accuracy and reliableness of his internal apprehensions. The whole Bible is a divine attestation of our human self-reliableness. God cannot speak to man except man has the faculty of hearing, nor can God move the heart of man, if man has either no heart to move, or if his heart yields him an uncertain or an untrue report. As a clean thing cannot come out of an unclean one, so uncertainty cannot bring forth certainty.

The general view which the Bible gives of man is lofty and engaging. Man considered in himself is spoken of by honourable epithets. Even the Greek language, with all its richness, has but two terms to denote man—one describing the species, the other its superiority; nor is it certain that these two are not forms of a common root. The Hebrew, however, has six original names for man. Of these one probably indicates the ruddy complexion of the earlier races, while two represent him in contrast with woman, in virtue of his manhood, one distinguishes his strength, and another acknowledges his dominion. Not least remarkable among the facts is that here we find a specific term to express the weaker side of his nature—that *flesh* by which he is connected with the brutes, and in the predominance of which he is led into sin.

This single fact shews that the Biblical psychology is more correspondent to fact and more exhaustive than what may be called the language of philosophy—namely the classic Greek. Certainly any view of man which omits sin as a part of man's nature and history, is seriously defective, and as such fundamentally wrong.

The conception of man thus presented in the names by which he is designated in Scripture, is so rooted in Hebrewism as to appear in its account of the creation of the universe. The author of that narrative appears to labour at the task of representing man's dignity in the sight of God. Other objects are without premeditation spoken into being: *i.e.*, "God said, let light be, and light was." But not without counsel and care (so to speak) does the Creator move to his last and greatest work. The fact itself may be understood to denote that man stands at the top of the scale of created beings. This certainly is indicated when God is represented as placing man over all other terrestrial things. The last element in the matter is the most expressive: God makes man in his own image, and after his own likeness. Emphasis is given to the statement by its being as good as made twice. Man then bears the image and likeness of his Creator. To use the figure of the original, man is God's shadow. As such he has in form the qualities which God possesses in perfection. Consequently, God's thoughts, though higher than man's thoughts, and his ways than man's ways (Isaiah lv., 8), have yet a ground of likeness in having a ground of comparison. The ground, as indicated by the context, is in God's loving kindness, and the efficiency of God's providential care. The wicked man has harsh thoughts of God, and so is without hope. But let him speedily return, and God will have mercy and abundantly pardon him; for God's word, like the rain, shall accomplish the great moral and spiritual renewals for which it is uttered. If, then, morally and spiritually, God and man resemble each other, our moral and spiritual sentiments and ideas are real and valid, since, in a faint degree, they correspond to their divine originals. If so, they are trustworthy. Moreover, as shadowy likenesses, they are also shadowy representations of their divine antitypes. It follows, that in knowing our moral and spiritual nature, we know God, and in obeying the voice of conscience, we really obey the voice of God.

The Hebrew estimate of man, as exemplified in the words by which he is denominated, and the account given of his creation, recurs in individual instances. The history of the patriarchs is the history of a noble race. "The fathers" are not, indeed, exempt from faults and blemishes, but the early archives of no nation present models of similar moral excellence and beauty. Beyond a doubt the Hebrew type excels other types of humanity in the great matter of character. Where shall I look to find anything superior to the simple and artless loveliness of Ruth? How grand a presence is that of the prophet Samuel? The

friendship of David and Jonathan is a fine instance of youthful confidingness and fidelity. Every one of the greater and the minor prophets, even those of whom we know nothing but his words, has a physiognomy of his own which wears a high moral tone. "These men are servants of the most High God" (Acts xvi, 17).

A similar tone may be taken in regard to the civilisation which grew out of the Hebrew stock. In a special manner its literature is transcendently high. In no age, in no country, has religion even yet produced a religious literature equal to that of the Hebrews. The Bible is a classic, no less than Homer or Virgil, but in sacred song it has the distinction of being The Classic of the World.

• One of the most interesting products of its sacred music describes man in the following lines, which I give in a version truer to the sense (if somewhat different in form) than that which the authorised version supplies (Ps. viii.) :—

O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent thy name in all the earth !
 Thou hast placed thy glory on the face of the heavens ;
 When I behold thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
 The moon and stars which thou hast made ;
 What is man that thou thinkest of him ?
 Man's son that thou carest for him ?
 Yet thou leavest him little short of thyself ;
 Thou crownest him with honour and glory ;
 Thou makest him lord over the works of thy hands ;
 All things thou hast placed under his feet—
 Sheep and oxen, and wild beasts,
 Fowls of heaven, and fish of the sea—
 What wandereth through the paths of the sea.
 O Jehovah, Our Lord, how excellent thy name in all the earth.

This relative view of God, God's works, and man has never been surpassed. Here we have God supreme over the universe, which, as his creation, manifests his majesty, and that in such a way as first to humiliate its beholder, man ; who, recollecting himself as God's child, feels his superiority even to sun, moon, and stars, and in holy veneration claims his divine lineage, declaring that God has made him little lower than himself.

Man's divine filiation, taught in the opening lines of the Bible, is implicitly re-asserted in almost every subsequent page. The entire economy, of which it is the record, proceeds on the assumption. It is true that a blot comes on man's escutcheon—a dark and dishonouring blot. But even man's disobedience does not silence God's lips, but rather calls forth more and more marked tokens of his love and care. The long succession of his forbearance and loving kindness has its crowning point in the advent of Jesus, God's well-beloved Son, who comes specially prepared and commissioned to redeem man from sin, and make him blessed by making him holy, even as God is blessed and holy.

These simple and sublime verities may with ordinary men have lost their freshness by force of repetition, but never can they in reality cease to be the truest and finest portrait of man, while they must ever remain the religious Magna Charta of the human race. Neither man individually nor man collectively can be ignoble or hopeless, so long as he continues to realise to himself the elevated position in which he is thus placed, in face of the universe and at the footstool of the Creator, who is not only his creator but his Father as well.

Of the complex nature of man, as represented in Scripture, I shall here say nothing. One element of it, however, I must not pass over, inasmuch as it is the meeting point between the Creator and his intelligent and worshipping creature. I allude to conscience. No sooner has man sinned than he is addressed of God in conscience. In other words, the Almighty Father hastens to the rescue of his child the moment the child has fallen into danger. This fact is embodied in an apologue or story correspondent to the genuine oriental manner.

The first human pair, with a view to their moral education, are, as soon as they become capable of knowing right from wrong, taken under God's instructing hand, and placed under the influence of a simple and clearly uttered moral law. "This you may do; that you must not do." The penalty is death. The liberty is most ample; the prohibition one single act of abstinence. The former they enjoy, the latter they disobey. The consequent guilt begets fear. They flee from God. In doing so they flee from conscience and themselves. In vain. They are overtaken, tried, condemned, and sentenced. Expelled from their happy abode they wander forth in want and woe, nor ever can they return until suffering has had its perfect work in heartfelt repentance and newness of life. (Gen. iii.) Our account, if more clear to popular apprehension, is tame when compared with the original Scripture.

That brief and picturesque narrative contains the natural history of sin. Every succeeding sin has only repeated the features of that first offence. Sin is the transgression of God's command. Sin rebuked by conscience begets fear, attempts concealment, is detected, pleads excuses, and is condemned and punished. So degraded and mean a thing is sin as to impeach Divine Providence, and to seek a cover by inculpating even a wife.

No word-painting equals that of the Bible. Hundreds of similar instances might be adduced. And no pictures of man's inner life approach its pictures in minuteness, fulness, and fidelity. In the instance before us the entire scene rises before our mind's eye and fixes itself on our memory in traits no less definite than painful.

We have seen the nature, origin, progress, detection, and conviction of sin. The remedy is not presented. This omission is

very unlike the Bible and the God of the Bible. In truth, we have only to read a little further to find the element we desiderate. No sooner has the Heavenly Father pronounced the sentence than he bethinks him of the wretchedness of the criminal, who, after all, is his own child. That guilty couple he will not leave to hopelessness and despair. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," he adds; thus manifesting his paternal compassion, and reviving his children's courage by opening in the future a bright and cheerful prospect.

The apologue, the substance of which I have thus given, is an epitome of the Bible. Moreover, it is an anticipative outline of Divine Providence, including God's dealings in Christ with man. Consequently it is the Gospel of the Garden of Eden.

So far as the nature and deadliness of sin is concerned, every man's experience is both a copy and a verification of the doctrine taught in this archaic envelope. Thus, now we each sin and suffer. Thus, now sin, we know, is the transgression of God's law. (1 John iii., 4.) Whether or not we are acquainted with God's compassionate forgiveness and his all-sufficient remedy, depends on the solemn question: Are we in Christ? Only through him can our bane be transmuted into a blessing.

These are broad and open facts and verities, taught indeed in the Bible, but also attested by the highest human experience, more or less fully, in individuals and in nations, during the lapse of many thousand years. Being such they claim attention, and may justifiably be adduced as a test of moral and religious truth, as well as of the truth of theories and the value of civilisations. Whether the view loses or gains, when regarded side by side with that of Renan, will be seen by and bye.

We have found conscience in the first sentences of the Bible. It forms a constituent of its general texture. At its bidding Abraham became an exile and a wanderer. At its bidding Joseph scorned the blandishments of Pharaoh's wife, and Moses renounced the most brilliant prospects of an Egyptian court in order to espouse the cause of a herd of slaves. It was the voice of conscience that Elijah heard in the dark recesses of Mount Horeb, and its "still small voice" sent him back to the post he had abandoned and the duty he had to perform. Conscience inspired and guided those "fingers of a man's hand" which wrote Belshazzar's doom on one side of his banquetting hall, while he caroused with the grandees of his empire. What else was the source of the prowess of Judas Maccabaeus? What else sustained the martyrs tortured and slain by Antiochus Epiphanes? What else sent John the Baptist to preach repentance in the wilderness of Judea? What else enabled Stephen to confess Christ, while sinking beneath that shower of murderous stones, and transmuted Paul from an envenomed and pitiless persecutor into an heroic, all-enduring, and most successful servant and mission-

ary of Christ? Moreover, conscience was the faculty to which our Lord appealed in the whole of his public ministry. The living and vivid power of his own sanctity, appealing to the slumbering conscience of those whom it drew within the circle of his influence, bowed down men's sinful hearts in homage before him, as the standing corn is bowed down before the heavy breeze. How effectually the power could be handled had been shown when the humble subject, Nathan, struck King David with contrition for the compound crime of adultery and assassination. With not less skill did Jesus shame into silence those Scribes and Pharisees who were hardhearted enough to put before him an adulteress as a means of finding some ground of accusation against himself, but who were so foiled by the force of his character and the adroitness of his words that, "convicted by their own conscience," they retired from what they felt to be his awful presence, "one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last." (John viii., 2, seq.)

So struck and impressed with the rule of conscience in Israel was the writer of the essay termed "The Epistle to the Hebrews," that he has given something like a formal list of the worthies whom its exercise had made famous in his day. Referring the reader to the Scripture itself (xi.) for "so great a cloud of witnesses," I draw attention to the fact that the Biblical name for conscience is faith, that faith which is the present realisation of hoped for good, and the clear vision of things not seen. This faith is at once a faculty and a power. As a faculty, it is the eye of the spirit. That eye not only discerns spiritual realities, but makes them present when absent, and near when distant, giving them such vividness as to endue them with power. The power thus acquired faith employs for practical purposes, making it the lever by which its possessor, lifting himself to God, becomes not only alive to duty, but prompt and effectual for its performance. Such, then, is conscience: it is God in man's soul, opening his eyes to see his duty, and girding him with might to accomplish it. This is the Biblical view of conscience. This is the sublime reality which everyone who is "taught of God," rather than trained in the schools, ought to recognise, revere, and obey.

I have described the Scriptural view of man as high and honourable. The last paragraph adds the principal reason for the averment. Man stands to his Maker in the most intimate moral and spiritual connexion. The connexion is indeed a communion. While we live in God, God lives in us, quickening, directing, refining, and raising our whole nature. Conscience is God dwelling in the core of man's higher life. The being of whom this may be said stands at the summit of earth-born existences, and possessing wondrous powers and opportunities, lies under the most serious, yet the most elevated responsibilities. The depth of every fall is measured by the height at which you

previously stood. How terrible then is sin. And can any system, whether of religion or philosophy, be of any value which omits on the one side man's grand possibilities and on the other man's fearful bane?

This divine resemblance may have been marred, but certainly has not been effaced by sin. Even in the dark period when Christ appeared the same appeal is made to man's conscience as had been made all through the earlier biblical ages, and the Apostle Paul characterises man as in his day not only the image but the glory of God (1 Cor. xi., 7). What, indeed, is the figure under which our Lord represents the great work he came to accomplish, but the establishment of the kingdom or rule of God in human hearts and lives? That supremacy is the supremacy of conscience; and the full effect of that sway is to bring out all the divine lineaments in man's spirit, in due fulness, proportion, and harmony, so as to produce the perfect man in Christ, that is, the highest development of our human capabilities.

In part this great result was attained during the period which is covered by our New Testament writings. The contemplated renovation of society began with the renovation of individuals. Never, within a similar space of time were moral changes so deep and thorough produced in equal number. In all history there is no parallel to the moral and spiritual renewal then effected. The reason is that at no time was conscience so quickened. The scriptural writers have no terms adequate to describe the change except the metaphor of a new birth, caused by the effusion of the same creative spirit of God as that which at first animated the universe, and still animates all orders of being, each after its kind. The New Testament overflows with texts which describe and attest the Reformation. We can cite but one instance. Let it be that of Philemon and Onesimus. The latter was the slave of the former. In that capacity he grossly neglected his duty and then ran away. Having, however, come into contact with Paul, then in prison for Christ, he was converted by the Apostle. As a sign of the depth and reality of the change, he was required by his spiritual friend and adviser to return to his master. This was the same as bidding him of his own accord resume his chains. Onesimus consents. He repairs to Philemon, with no protection but a few lines from the prisoner. How will he be received? As a slave, certainly. But may he not be subjected to grievous punishment? Nay, is his life safe? Paul, however, will say a word for him, and the word he does say is one of great import. He does not ask his master to remit the debt Onesimus may owe him, but takes the obligation on himself. Nor does he request Philemon to receive him as a servant, but "as a brother," nay as "a brother beloved;" beloved certainly he was by Paul, and therefore he will, the Apostle hopes, be beloved also by his former owner, now, by his having owned Christ, become incapable of owning his fellow-men.

This single instance shows how the spiritual equality and brotherhood of the Gospel entered into and penetrated all the veins of individual life, and all the joints and bands of social life, transforming men and their relationships in a way and to a degree quite unparalleled. Onesimus, having become a Christian brother to the Apostle, returns to the condition which he once hated and may still fear, and when he comes into the presence of Philemon, he finds that his master is his friend, and he himself his master's beloved brother.

This last result, though not recorded, is made all but certain by the apostle's words: "Having confidence in thy compliance with my request I have written unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do more than I say" (Philemon 21). Repeat the instance a thousand, nay ten thousand times, then consider that the whole involves pangs, throes, and victories of conscience in matters touching the inmost sap of human life, and even then you will still have but a very imperfect notion of the moral power and grandeur of the simple and pure religion of Jesus. That notion, however, is an approximative measure of the greatness and the value of that higher life the gain of which Christ describes as preferable to the possession of the whole world (Matt. xvi., 26).

The Biblical view of man, which I have briefly described, was no transient reality. It has been reproduced every passing year since the canon was closed. Husbands and wives who, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, "walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless" (Luke i., 5), have never failed to adorn their Christian profession by a conscientious discharge of their daily duties, whether in high station or low, whether possessed of little earthly culture or much. The Christian home exhibits the genuine Christian life, and that pure, simple, loving, and self-denying sphere, in which conscience is supreme, best shows what human nature is, what it is capable of becoming, and what God in Christ has bestowed on man of the highest and best description. This blessing, given to all faithful fathers and mothers throughout Christendom, is peculiarly an English privilege, and so long as we value and cherish it as we ought, we shall be proof against all philosophical assaults or seductions.

It would be easy to show that such is the testimony borne to the Gospel by the experience of eighteen centuries. Here I can do no more than give a few instances.

MAN CONTEMPLATIST IN PUBLIC LIFE.

My first instance is that of one who, from being almost a philosopher, became a thorough Christian, and died the death of a martyr.

FLAVIUS JUSTINUS.

Flavius Justinus, surnamed the Martyr from the manner of his death, was born at the close of the apostolic age, either near the

end of the first or the beginning of the second century, at Shechem, in Samaria, which, at the time, had become a Romano-Greek colony, under the name of Flavia Neapolis. The atmosphere in which he grew up was not inauspicious for the general expansion of his higher nature, so that he early felt a strong attraction toward a knowledge of divine things, as a means and source of tranquillity of mind. Actuated by so intense a desire he left home, and placed himself at the feet of the most famous teachers of his day. Resolved to leave no prospect unexplored, he made himself familiar with the writings of the Greek philosophers. His earnestness and diligence were but ill rewarded. Seeking certainty, he found doubt; seeking clearness, he found a whirl of opinions. Plato fell least short of what he wanted. Attracted by certain grains of gold, he devoted himself to a careful study of the works of that great philosophic genius. The prospect brightened, and he hoped ere long to have the happiness of saying, in words used by Archimedes when, having solved a perplexing problem in the bath, he hurried out exclaiming, "I have it, I have it!" In this state of anticipation he one day sauntered along a river's bank, when he was met by an aged man, of dignified mien. A secret sympathy led to the exchange of words, when the embryo philosopher laid open his mind to his companion. "You are on the wrong track," he said to the inquirer. "The certainty and peace you seek cannot be yours by the aid of the sages of Greece. Their wisdom is of the head, whereas the science of living is the business of the heart. More ancient than they, other sages, inspired by the Spirit of God, have revealed the true way of life. They teach one God, the Father of all, and Jesus Christ his Son, envoy, and image. Read what they have written, and you will have your wants supplied, provided always that you pray as much as you read, for prayer opens and keeps up that communion between God and man, whence come the true light and the abiding peace."

Having uttered these words the venerable old man departed, leaving Justin buried in thought. He had heard of the Christians before, but was too absorbed in philosophical reveries to think that any good thing could come out of Nazareth. Now, however, the earnest word he had heard struck a spark out of his memory, which became first a light and then a flame. He resolved to procure the Christians' books. He began by perusing the old Hebrew prophets, and they kindled in him a spirit totally different to any he had felt before. Here was the Spirit of God himself communing with his own spirit. He continued his studies, and ere long found the light, certainty, and peace he had desired so long and so much. Yet he made no haste to profess his change of mind. He read and prayed, he prayed and read. At length he became assured that the religion of Jesus was the way of peace. Yet difficulties remained. The Christians were

everywhere spoken against. Was he, then, still mistaken, or were the charges false? Taking the proper step, he sought intercourse with the new religionists. After carefully watching their acts, learning their doctrines, ascertaining their aims, and studying their spirit, he became convinced not only that the evil reports he had heard were untrue, but that in general the disciples of Christ were remarkable for mildness and forbearance under persecution, and filled with a hope of the purest, loftiest, and most stable kind. "I saw," he says, "I saw the Christians fearless in bitter sufferings and cruel death, and hence learnt that their living in sin and vice was impossible." The longer and more careful his inquiries, the deeper and the more lively became his conviction, until at length he renounced philosophy, and openly professed the Christian faith. The grounds of his conversion were numerous. The principal was his own growing personal assurance, arising from the beneficial affects produced on him by Christianity. He had found the light, the aid, the strength, the peace he had so long sought in vain among the Pythagorean, the Stoic, the Platonic philosophers. Having freely received, he could do no other than freely give, for such he held to be a first principle and a great obligation under Christ. Besides, had he not discovered the great secret of the moral world? Had he not had revealed to him the mystery hidden from secular wisdom from the earliest days? What in his eyes was philosophy, but a ceaseless "yes" and "no;" and what the Gospel, except that which is described by Paul: "Our word toward you was not yea and nay, but in Jesus was yea; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. i., 17 seq.) In one sense he did not abandon philosophy, but after he became a Christian continued to wear the philosopher's cloak, to symbolise what to him was an important fact, namely, that Christianity was the true philosophy. Yet the discovery which he thus made the world has been so slow to learn, that even yet some prefer the deductions of their own heads to the inspirations and teachings of God in the Bible, their own hearts, and society. Others make out of a sort of philosophic and Christian amalgam a third something, which, if it has any definite qualities of its own, is certainly neither religion nor philosophy. Nor are we sure—such is human frailty—that Justin brought to the Gospel a mind thoroughly cleansed from philosophic dregs, nor that in his teachings he did not set a step on the fatal descent by which the simple doctrine of the Cross—the love of man springing from the love of God—was changed into a concrete of logical conclusions.

Whatever opinion may be held of Justin's system of thought, he doubtless felt and strove to make others feel the moral and spiritual power of Christianity. The fact is illustrated in his earnestness. To hide his light under a bushel was to him a sin which would be severely punished by the great Light-Giver. In

consequence he neglected no opportunity of aiding his fellow-men to become as well instructed, as pure in life, and as tranquil in emotion as himself. "Undoubtedly," he says, "it is our duty to afford all an opportunity of looking into our Christian doctrine and life, lest we ourselves have to bear the penalty of those who err through ignorance."

His was a day when literary courtesy was rare. Yet great was his Christian love and gentleness toward all whom he attempted to inform, whether by debate or by direct instruction. Equally was he firm and unshaken in endurance at a period when endurance was the Christian's lot by day and night, at home and abroad.

The treatment he received was very different to that he gave. The chief adversary of the Christian religion at that time was one Crescens, a master in the Cynic School, a proud and vicious man. To dispute with one of such a character, yet having influence in high quarters, was a danger which a merely prudent man would have avoided. Success could hardly fail to issue in persecution and probably death. Undeterred by personal considerations this Christian David joined issue with the Roman Goliath. His pebbles from the brook penetrated the giant's forehead. Slain in argument, Crescens sought his revenge at law. Justin, brought before the Prætor, was found guilty of being a Christian.

The reigning Emperor Antoninus was surnamed The Pius, and his follower, Marcus Aurelius, was surnamed the philosopher. Yet, though the two belonged to the better class of Roman Emperors, neither the heathen piety of the one nor the Stoic philosophy of the other saved their innocent subjects from cruel persecution. "The full of assurance of faith" to which Justin had attained took from him the fear of death. He boldly faced the political and sacerdotal authorities, bearing in his hand formal defences of the Gospel, in which he adduced the solid grounds on which it stood, and did his best to exculpate his fellow-believers. The answer which Marcus Aurelius gave to his appeal was a sentence of death. In company with other Roman disciples Justin was executed in the year of our Lord 163.

If thou, reader, seekest truth and peace for thy soul follow the advice which the unknown Christian sage gave to the youthful Justin. Search the Scripture, and ask God to purify thy moral vision, that thou mayest be able to see his truth. As it is only the pure in heart that see God, so it is only they that see God as he is whether in themselves, the Bible, or Providence. An impure life interposes the thickest veil between our sight and God's verities. A personal or selfish aim distorts as well as discolours whatever we look at in the way of religion. And then seek not the living among the dead. The sole fount of spiritual life is not dialectics nor human tradition, but "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. i., 5).

Luther once wrote to a friend the following words : " It is certain that no one can understand sacred Scripture either by ordinary study or his own mind. Consequently you must begin your researches with prayer. Entreat the Lord to open your heart to the true meaning of his word. God's word is best expounded by its Author, as he himself has said in the promise, *They shall be all taught of God.* (Micah iv., 2, comp. John vi., 45.) Trust not in thy learning, nor lean to thine own understanding, but seek the true light at its fountain head, the Spirit of God in communion with thy spirit." Here may be seen the reason why so many hear and read the Scripture without attaining to either faith, hope, or charity. Their ears are closed, their eyes are shut, their moral sense is all but dead. Hence, seeing they see not, hearing they hear not, neither do they understand or apprehend any of the great things of God ; but the simpler, the purer, the more costly the food offered them, the greater their distaste (Matt. xiii). In other words, they pray not. And why? because they do not seek what Justin sought.

The thought here presented, to the effect that the sense of Scripture can not be elicited with exactitude and fulness, except by a devout as well as intelligent heart, is sanctioned by Pascal, who stands in the highest rank of religious authorities.

"Scripture," he says, "is not a science of the intellect, but a science of the heart : a science which is intelligible only for those whose heart is upright, and in which all others find obscurity."

On the contrary, Renan recommends that Scripture should be approached and handled with supreme indifference :

"These works (on religion) ought to be executed with a supreme indifference, as if you were writing for a deserted planet. Every concession to scruples of an inferior order is a failure in the worship you owe to art and truth."—"Les Apôtres," Introd., p. liv.

At what a distance does the confirmed philosopher stand from the philosopher turned Christian. No wonder the literary results are so dissimilar. He that sets his hand to any thing with supreme indifference, will diffuse over his work the same dead apathy, and is totally unfit to write any history whatever, for it is the office of history to make the past *live*, live over again. Moreover, to require "supreme indifference" in regard to religion any way, is to require an impossibility, for the alternatives of true or false, together with their issues, are too momentous to allow even comparative unconcern. But you are to be indifferent not only as to what you learn, but also as to what you say, "as if you were writing for a deserted planet." So unreasonable, so unnatural, a demand is futile from the first. What "the inferior order" is, scruples to which the critic deprecates, we do not know, but if it is the natural and healthy sentiment of piety to God and consideration for your fellow-creatures, then I decline to unman

myself in order to reach the perfect condition of an imaginary philosophic indifference—a state of mind which in quenching interest, curiosity, and activity, would suppress our higher nature and introduce universal stagnation. Where then would “worship” be? Worship of any kind, for worship implies the reverse of indifference. No worship of truth could exist where truth was regarded with “supreme indifference.” As to the worship of art, that is an act or habit which is good or bad in the degree in which it is compatible with what we owe to concerns of a higher order, or rather the highest order of all—God and duty. Nor can any feasible reason be given why I should try to deceive myself with the fancy that I am writing for a “deserted planet,” when I know very well that I am writing for the inhabitants of the earth.

Let the reader mark the vague manner in which the religious term worship is here used. The observation may be of service hereafter.

In the body of the sketch of Justin’s life just given, I have assumed that it was right for Justin to discard opinions which to him were untrue, right to seek diligently a better way, and right also to show that better way to others. The assumption will, I have no doubt, find sympathy with most of my readers. To “seek truth in the love of it,” and to try to make others as well enlightened and as tranquil as yourself, is the act of a good as well as wise man. Deny this and you declare Christ an enthusiast and Christianity a blunder. What then is to be said when philosophy, as in what follows, virtually condemns Justin and all others who served God for conscience sake, and recommends a system of indifference, concealment and falsification, the practice of which would soon eat out the heart of humanity?

“Let us not attempt to establish anything. Let us remain in our respective churches, profiting by their long-established worship and their traditional virtue, sharing in their good works, and enjoying the poetry of the past. Let us repel only their intolerance. Even that intolerance we must pardon, for like selfishness, it is one of the necessities of human nature. To suppose that new religious families will be founded, or that their mutual proportions will alter much, is to act against appearances. The old religious institutions have the option to yield or to perish.”—“*Les Apôtres* ;” *Introd.*, p. lx.

If this advice is good for members of Christian Churches, it must be so on a principle equally incumbent on philosophers. Why then has Renan written all these books? Why did he write his “*Apostles*”? Why is his pen still busy? “Let us not attempt to establish any thing; let us remain in our respective Churches or our respective systems of philosophic belief or disbelief,” is advice which, if good for him to give, must be equally good for him to follow. But here he is in act superior to what he is in word. With all his professed indifference, he is a zealous and restless propagandist. His earnestness we commend; it is his short-sightedness and inconsistency we deplore. I resume the

more agreeable office of presenting the true and the good, rather than exposing the untrue and the bad. The next biographical sketch regards

BLANDINA, THE FEMALE SLAVE MARTYR.

Most formidable was the persecution which raged over the Gallic Churches of Lyons and Vienne, in the year 177, A.D. The rage of the adversary was great, and no torture too cruel to be employed by him against the followers of Christ; but still greater was the steadfastness of the sufferers, and again still greater was the inspiration which God poured into their hearts during their "fiery trial." Truly might each one of "the martyrs of Lyons" apply to himself the Apostle's words: "I can do (bear) all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philip. iv., 13.) And yet, so much confidence not one of them would venture to assume as true of himself. Their weakness was their strength. They were sustained not by their own arm, but by the arm of the Almighty. Conscious of their trepidation, with bodies vibrating with the anticipated torture, with hearts writhing under the agonies of their fellow-sufferers, yet with minds fully bent and set to meet death heroically, each one of them might, with more propriety, adopt that other word of Paul's: "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. xii., 10.)

The first that was brought before the tribunal of the Prætor was the superintendent or bishop of the church, Pothinus by name, a grey-haired man, ninety years of age, whose early days must have been spent in the last quarter of the first century. Weakened by age and sickness, he yet bore a calm and almost cheerful countenance, and approaching the seat of judgment as if with youthful alacrity, he confessed Christ with accents firm and glad. "Who is the Christian's God?" asked the judge, probably expecting to hear the name, if not of some one of the Olympian divinities, yet of those which were worshipped in Syria, Egypt, or Asia Minor. The question may, too, by its tone have expressed a taunt or contempt. The higher officers of the Roman empire were at the moment actuated more by aversion to what they called superstition than by regard for religion and seekers after truth. The question called forth from Pothinus this answer: "You will know him yourself as soon as you are worthy to know him." The words aroused the multitude that stood around the Prætor's chair. They stormed, they raged; they turned their injurious words into more injurious blows. Pothinus fell, and was almost trodden to death. The judge looked on with "supreme indifference." Hardly breathing, still the venerable servant of Christ was dragged away and thrown into a dungeon, where he died within two days.

Others, like him, expired in prison, sinking under hunger, thirst, and complicated suffering.

Others perished in a still more pitiable way, losing courage under their tortures, so as to deny Christ. Several of these, however, were recovered by the example, the prayers, and the exhortations of their brethren, and, becoming more courageous than ever, made finally a good confession.

One aim the persecutors pursued with full determination. They spared no means in order to extort from their victims an avowal of the crimes with which the Christians were publicly and privately charged. As in the ages of (so to call it) Christian superstition, the persecutor sought for self-exculpation by wringing out of his victims a confession of the witchcraft laid to their charge, so those pagan persecutors grew furious against a sufferer in the degree in which they were foiled by his stedfastness in asserting his own innocence and the innocence of his fellow-believers. The hope of the adversary was strongly excited by the appearance at the bar of a slave girl, Blandina by name. Here was a fine opportunity. Of course she knew all that went on in her mistress's family, and that all, everybody said, contained many a frightful deed. "Only, then, use torture enough, and we shall obtain such a confession as, pertaining to this distinguished household, will prove to everybody that we are doing no more than our duty in bringing such crimes to light." The wrack (to use a modern term) was applied, freely applied; more freely still. In vain. Her only confession was: "I am a Christian, nothing wicked is done amongst us." The greater the torture the stronger she seemed to grow. Taken back to prison, she spent the night in communicating her own courage to fellow-prisoners. Produced again in public the next day and subjected to fresh torments, she said merely, "I am a Christian, and nothing wicked is done amongst us." The day of her doom was come. It was "a Roman holiday," made such, not by gladiatorial fights, but by agonies inflicted on an innocent and defenceless girl and her religious associates. A deacon, called Sanctus, and a fellow-believer named Maturus, were first flogged and then set on a burning iron chair; while Blandina, bound to a stake, had her limbs contemptuously contorted into the shape of a cross. Thus hanging there, this slave girl uttered no complaint, begged no pity, entreated no alleviation, but simply sang praise to God for the faith he gave, and implored similar support for her fellow-sufferers. The executioners, according to their nature, remained unmoved, simply letting out the wild beasts on their victims. The brutes, less brutish than their human masters, drew back from the offensiveness of the half-burnt bodies. Thereupon, the skulls of Sanctus and Maturus were split with a poleaxe, and Blandina was conveyed back to prison.

Among the Christian captives there were Roman citizens.

"What is to be done with them?" asked the Prætor of his master. The answer was—"Unless they deny Christ let them be beheaded." Remaining faithful they suffered decapitation. Those, however, who, not being members of the Roman empire, were accounted slaves were put to death—by the most excruciating methods. Blandina and a boy, named Ponticus, were first compelled to witness the execution of others. The expectation was that they would lose courage at the sight and make confession. The expectation was disappointed. Full of courage, Blandina communicated her spirit to the youth, who, after bearing his sufferings calmly, sank like a young fawn hunted to death on its native hills. These over, now came Blandina's turn. By her persistence, and by the spirit she communicated, she had given her torturers much trouble, and shall now receive her reward. A burning gridiron is brought forth on which she is laid. She prays and suffers—but still lives. Then they roll her in a net and throw her thus entangled to a maddened bull. It is a plaything for him. He gores her and tosses her about until the spectators are sickened at the sight, and order their victim to receive the *coup de grace*. Thereupon she is dispatched with a sword. Even the pagans allowed that never was so much heroism seen in a slave girl. The Christians looked to a higher power, and gave the glory to God.

Great, deep, and lasting was the impression of those frightful scenes on many who saw them, and some who heard of them; and the word of God was spread abroad in those regions. Fana-ticism is capable of much endurance, but its lower character is betrayed by assumption, extravagance and defiance. The true martyr spirit is easily known by its accompaniments. It is simple, unpretentious, self-forgetful, even self-distrustful, looking to God in and for all. These are the characters and proofs of its divinity. In this spirit Jesus suffered, and all who are like him in their sufferings are, and ever will be, like him in their glory.

I pretend not to the power of reading this act of martyrdom in the original narratives with unmoved heart. All is simple, natural, sober. Yet, all is terrible, overpoweringly terrible. No ordinary student, how critical soever, would feel a doubt of its truthfulness. I do not say that all similar narratives bear the same stamp. But the same evidences of genuineness attach to the earlier documents. Renan, however, prefers the saints to the martyrs of the church. The former he lauds to the skies, the latter he undervalues. Yet, in impartial eyes, if the former are great, greater are the latter. Study the histories of both with cautious discrimination, but do not derogate from the martyrs because of the clear, loud, and durable testimony they bear to Christ and Christianity. Yet, what is the half banter, half derision of the following extract?—

"The virgin martyrs would certainly merit the palm, did not criticism so often reduce their histories into charming little romances. What ingenious

combinations are those which presided at the creation of these legends ! What a fine stroke of æsthetics in the association of faith, youth, and death ! Ancient art cleverly drew analogous contrasts from the myth of the Amazons ; but antiquity, a stranger to our religious refinements, could conceive nothing so delicate as this theological firmness in a young maiden. In general, the legends of the martyrs, which demand in the interests of history so rigid a control, are distinguished by a prodigious richness of invention. Next to love, martyrdom has furnished to poetry the most diverse combinations."—" Etudes," pp. 310, 311.

A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER.

I next sketch the character of one who is all but unknown to fame, who is distinguished by no illustrious ancestry, held no official dignities, left no great memorial in books or institutions ; and who, nevertheless, was one of the best and ablest of men, and who, when the true saints find due recognition, will undoubtedly occupy a foremost niche in the Pantheon of the human race.

Firmin Abauzit was born at Uzès, in Languedoc, the 11th November, 1679. The city of his nativity, noticeable on many accounts, is distinguished chiefly for having been one of the strongholds held in self-defence by the French Protestants. In 1629 it was wrested out of their hands and dismantled. Little is known of Abauzit's family. The name seems to indicate an Arab origin, and tradition confirms the idea by tracing the family back to an Arab physician who settled in Toulouse about the 14th century. At the age of two years Abauzit lost his father. This bereavement must have been the more painful to his mother (whose maiden name was Anne Darlle) since the French Government then exercised all the severities of despotism, in order to bring back into the Romish Church the children of Protestant widows. On the 12th of July, 1685, it issued an edict intended to remove such children from their mother's supervision after their father's death. The edict of the Revocation of Nantes and that of January, 1686, were more explicit. High officials were charged with the duty of placing Protestant children, from five to sixteen years of age, in the hands of their Catholic relatives ; or, if they had none, in the hands of such Catholics as the judges might appoint. Accordingly, Firmin and his younger brother were taken away from their home and placed in the college of Uzès, to undergo a Romanist training. How many mothers would, in such a position, have given themselves up to grief. Very different was the conduct of the mother of those two boys. Taking counsel only of her own good heart, she deceived the vigilance of her persecutors ; and, after having withdrawn her sons from their hands, secretly sent them to Geneva, the Protestant city of refuge at the time, where they happily arrived in 1689, having escaped a thousand dangers. She had, however, exposed herself to the terrors of the law. She was sent to prison. There her health failed so rapidly that her case called forth such compassion as to cause the time of her detention to be shortened.

As soon as she was restored to liberty, she hesitated not a moment to again brave, at the peril of her life, the terrible legislation by which the French Protestants were oppressed. The law was that no one of them should leave the kingdom on pain of the galleys for men and for women the confiscation of person and property. Maternal love triumphed. Madame Abauzit set out for Geneva, where she had the indescribable happiness of joining her children. From that time she occupied herself exclusively with their education. Under such a guide they could not help entering on the path of virtue with a firm and steady step.

Possessed of favourable dispositions, Firmin made rapid progress. Polite literature, history, geography, antiquities, natural philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, even theology were successively objects of his careful study. His memory was surprising. A superior analyst, he touched no science without going to the bottom of it. The extent of his knowledge did not impair its solidity. Its basis was deep as well as broad. Nor did its variety obscure his judgment.

After completing his university studies, Abauzit in 1698, visited Holland and England. In these countries he formed acquaintance with several scholars, and men of science, of whom we may mention Bayle and Newton. With them he long afterwards kept up an epistolary correspondence. Newton valued his young friend so highly that, on sending to him his *Commercium Epistolicum*, he wrote: "You are quite able to judge between Leibnitz and myself." On his side, Abauzit gave Newton a proof that his esteem was not ill placed, by undertaking his defence against Castel, and by pointing out to him, in his *Principia*, an error which the illustrious mathematician corrected in the second edition of his great work. From a letter it also appears that Abauzit led Newton to change an opinion on the eclipse observed by Thales, 585 years before the Christian era. Abauzit's repute reached the ears of our William III., from whom he received offers intended to retain him in England; but a letter from his mother urging his return gave him an excuse for declining the overture. Zealous of his independence, he would never accept any place, not even that of Professor of Philosophy in the College of Geneva, which was offered to him in 1723. He solely consented in 1727 to fulfil gratuitously the duties of one of the conservators of the city library, in acknowledgment of the honour he had received by being made a citizen of the republic.

We have said that Abauzit's memory was prodigious. Some instances have been preserved. Lullin, a Genevese professor, conversed with him one day of a particular fact in ecclesiastical history. The question concerned Virgil, Bishop of Salzburg, in the eighth century, who was, it is said, excommunicated by Pope Zachary for having advanced that there were antipodes. What was his astonishment when he heard Abauzit discuss the subject

thoroughly as if he had just studied it, though for thirty years he had read nothing on the point. Something similar was experienced by J. J. Rousseau, who consulted him on the music of the ancients. Abauzit set before him clearly and methodically all that Rousseau had become acquainted with only after long and persevering study, at the same time disclosing to him many things of which he was ignorant; nevertheless he had not given attention to the subject since the days of his youth. The celebrated traveller Pococke felt no less astonishment when he heard Abauzit accurately describe the countries which he had just traversed and studied. Hardly could he be persuaded that Abauzit had not visited those lands except with the aid of his library.

Having a truly encyclopedic mind, Abauzit studied and mastered nearly all the sciences as they were known in his day. Yet he wrote little. He loved study for itself. Never did a desire for fame trouble his life. It is this which principally induced the author of *Emile* to write the magnificent eulogy of Abauzit. In his *Nouvelle Heloise* one of the characters, "Milord Edouard," writes to Saint-Preux:—

"Will you then never be anything but a talker, limiting yourself to making good books instead of performing good actions?"

"No," adds Rousseau, in a note on this passage:—

"No, this philosophic age will not pass away without producing a true philosopher. I know one, and but one; but that is something; besides, he lives in my own country. Shall I venture to name here one whose true glory is to have remained unknown? Learned and modest Abauzit, let your sublime simplicity forgive my heart for a zeal which has not your name for its object. No; it is not you that I desire to make known to this age unworthy to admire you; it is Geneva that I wish to make illustrious as being your abode; it is my fellow-citizens that I wish to honour in return for the honour they pay you in giving you a home. Happy the land where the merit that conceals itself is all the more esteemed! Happy the people where haughty youth abases its dogmatic tone, and blushes at its vain knowledge before the learned ignorance of a sage. Virtuous and venerable old man! You will not have been eulogised by wits; noisy academies will not have echoed with your praise; instead of depositing your wisdom in books like them, you have put it into your life for an example to the country you have condescended to choose—a country which you love and by which you are respected. You have lived like Socrates; but he died by the hand of his fellow-citizens, while by yours you are cherished."

It has been observed that this eulogy, so well merited, is the only one that Rousseau addressed in his writings to any living person.

Voltaire, who, it is said, was much indebted to Abauzit for materials in the composition of his historical works, expressed for him admiration similar to that of Rousseau. One day, when one of Voltaire's thousand flatterers told him he had come to Geneva to see a great man, the latter, interrupting the speaker, asked: "Have you seen Abauzit?"

La Harpe says of Abauzit that "he was respectable by a long

career entirely passed in philosophic studies, and in the practise of all the virtues." "He was," says Millin, "religious by principle, a Christian by conviction, pious without hypocrisy, virtuous without austerity." His simplicity equalled his modesty, it pervaded the whole man. Economical of his time, he was prodigal in labours for his friends, whose works contain many passages which owe their existence to his pen. Accordingly, he is not to be judged by the writings that were published after his death. He would not allow his productions to see the light. He thought so little of them that, when he had lent them, he took no pains to get them returned. It was thus that several of his learned dissertations were published without his knowledge, and had great success. Moreover, many original ideas belonging to him lost the merit of novelty, either because other persons had made use of them, or because they were come upon by scholars who were studying the same subjects; none the less the honour was his, and none the less do they aid to show the height and depth of his genius.

A short time before his death, Abauzit's thoughts were turned to Rousseau, whose mind had been beaten and tossed by doubt, but who was then gradually settling down into Christian faith. Sending to Rousseau his last farewell, Abauzit wrote :—

"Dear Philosopher,—I have loved you much; I have seriously suffered in all your sufferings. If you wish tranquillity for the future, believe my lengthened experience. Employ in the reconstruction of your faith the faculties you have employed in the service of doubt; after having searched a long time we bless our labours when they lead us to believe."

In the midst of his peaceful studies, Abauzit departed this life in a small house near Geneva, whither he had some time before retired, ending his laborious and honourable career in the spirit of a true Christian, in which he had lived, on the 20th of March, 1767, in his eighty-eighth year.—"La France Protestante," vol. 1, pp. 4 seq.

Abauzit shows us what man really is, by showing us what he may be and do in the quiet retreats of ordinary life. A similar lesson, proceeding from a minister of Christ, is read to us by

RABAUT SAINT-ETIENNE.

In his excellent book on *The Revolution*, Edgar Quinet has maintained this thesis, honourable in truth for French Protestants, namely, that the first revolution would not have rushed into excess and been lost in despotism, could it have opposed to Catholic influences the ideas of individual liberty and moral emancipation which the Lutheran Reformation had proclaimed and partly established. Remove from the national history of France that huge spot of mire and blood called religious persecution, which extends from Francis I. (1515) to Louis XVI.

(1774) and in 1789, you would find in that country two millions of independent consciences and manly intellects, two millions of Huguenots, to struggle in favour of right, and to gain ascendancy for true principles. With such aid the revolution would have been saved from ruin. The Protestant idea, which has made England, Germany, and the United States so great, would have transformed France in a similar manner. The happy result was prevented by religious wars and the revocation of the edict of Nantes; yet those terrible scourges did not wholly keep the revolution aloof from the beneficial influence of the Protestant spirit. A protestant, Jean Jacques Rousseau, was the prophet and the legislator of the revolution; while Necker, Barnave, Boissy d'Anglas, Rabaut St. Etienne, that is, several of the best citizens of that important period, belong by birth and education to French Protestantism. Of the last-mentioned of those worthies we subjoin a biographical sketch.

Rabaut Saint-Etienne was born in the Cevennes Mountains, on the south-east of France, during the days of Catholic persecution. When he entered the world (April, 1743) a price had been set upon his father's head, his mother was threatened with a dungeon, and his other relatives were fleeing from place to place, to escape from the hands of their persecutors. "He often told me," says Boissy d'Anglas, "that he never knew by day where he should rest his head at night. His father alone had the secret of the daily flight, and, when it was wished to change the district, he was carried after dark to the spot where he was to be received."

In the midst of this life of continual disquiet and uncertain wanderings, his father, the Rev. Paul Rabaut, found time and freedom of mind for the education of his son. What cannot parental love effect? When the severe occupations of his ministry became too absorbing, he entrusted to friends the office of his son's elementary instruction. Notwithstanding adverse circumstances the youth went through a preliminary training alike solid and prolific. At an early day he was sent to Geneva, where he was placed under the instructions of Pastor Chiron until he repaired to Lausanne. There he did not remain long. The times demanded men of action rather than men of letters. French fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters needed moral and spiritual succour. The cry of their need struck his ear, and he returned to his native land and consecrated himself to the sublime work of the Christian ministry. Invited to settle at Bordeaux, he preferred Nîmes, if only because it was his father's cure, and there by his father's side he discharged his pastoral functions from the year 1765. Paul Rabaut was no less bold than pious and diligent. At the very time when any traitor might have grown rich by betraying his whereabouts, he, of his own accord, went out of his secrecy to present (giving his name) a petition in favour of his co-religionists to the Marquis de Paulmy. Struck

with admiration, the soldier sent the document to the king. The result was some alleviation of the rigors exercised against the Protestants.

What more valuable than a good father? To a well-disposed son, nothing. In the case before us, father and son were truly Christians. The father aimed to breathe his own lofty spirit into the son, and the son aimed to receive the blessed influence, especially in the exercise of his ministerial duties; the son caught, welcomed, and cherished the father's inspiration. In consequence he showed the same piety, the same charity, the same earnestness, the same constancy. Pre-eminently mild and amiable no less than strong and resolute, the young man was free from bitterness in the midst of injustice and severity. All his influence was employed in supporting patience and resignation, in avoiding troubles, in maintaining order and peace. The qualities of his character, and the superiority of his intellect, gave peculiar force to his words of advice and consolation. "I inhabited, at Nîmes, during ten years, the same house as he," says the biographer before mentioned, "and saw him every day during that portion of my life. Not a word escaped from him but added something to my esteem and friendship." His preaching, rather refined than vigorous, was not unlike that of Massillon, whom he liked much and read constantly. He possessed the gift of communicating what he felt, which is the privilege of true orators. Accordingly he was very popular, in the best sense of the word. His name drew crowds around his pulpit. Equally was he popular out of the house of prayer. His prudence on difficult occasions, his courage, his devotedness gained him hearts on all sides. Prodigious of effort on behalf of such as were in peril, in need, in sickness, in the article of death, he never hesitated to expose his life when bidden by duty to carry the consolations of the gospel to sufferers, or to minister (so far as he was able), to hunger, thirst, nakedness, destitution. How many subterfuges had he to employ, how many dangers to affront in order to soothe the agony of a dying man. The vigilance of governors, the pursuit of soldiers, the hate of the Catholic clergy, denunciations on the part of individuals,—these and a thousand other perils and obstacles—were constantly on his path. The laws were terrible. The general principle was the fearful lie that no longer were there any Protestants in France. One consequence of the abominable principle was that no marriages were recognised except those which were solemnised by Catholic priests. The offspring of a Protestant marriage were illegitimate. This foul blot rests on the memory of one whom history styles "the Great." Little, if not infamous, would be a more suitable title for Louis XIV. Louis XV. was not more tolerant. So late as the middle of the last century (1745) two ordinances condemned to the galleys all who attended Protestant sermons, and that without trial. Nor was the law in-

effectual. Many of the finest characters in the country were doomed to a life of cruel and degrading slavery ; children were torn from their parents, women were beaten with rods and then incarcerated for life. In 1754 the Protestant minister Lafage, betrayed by a spy, was, within four and twenty hours, seized, condemned, and executed by the mere order of the sheriff of Bas-Languedoc. On the 19th of February, 1762, that is at the moment when Rabaut Saint-Etienne was passing the Swiss frontier in order to preach the Reformed religion in France, Francois Rochette was expiating on a gibbet at Toulouse, the crime of being a Protestant minister.

A better day was beginning to dawn. The juridical murder of Calas, at Toulouse, on the 9th of March, 1762, aroused the mind of Europe. John Calas, a merchant of that city, was of the Protestant faith. One of his sons being found hanged, a report was set on foot that his father was the hangman. The crime had been committed because the young man had gone over to Catholicism. The report, taken up by a bigotted and superstitious populace, soon grew into a general conviction. The conviction became a passion. Calas was apprehended. Overborne by the storm, he was first wracked, in order to extort confession, and then put to death. Intelligence of the facts reached the ears of Voltaire, who, throwing all his liberality and zeal into the contest, opened hostilities against the monstrous crime, until he compelled the authorities to declare their victim innocent.

This was the death-blow of persecution. Never more can it revive in formidable strength. The immediate effect was to alleviate the crushing burden on French protestantism. Without delay its disciples enjoyed a certain toleration. After all, what is a precarious toleration, especially when edicts of proscription may be carried into effect any day or any hour? "The Protestants," wrote Lafayette to Washington in 1785, "are subject to an intolerable despotism. Though there is no open persecution, they depend on the King, the Queen, the Parliament, the Minister. Their marriages are not legal, their wills are not legal ; their children are considered bastards ; their persons are liable to the gallows."

Rabaut Saint-Etienne made it his mission to overturn the whole of this iniquitous system.

Not daring to put out any free and liberal book in his native land, he, in 1779, published his first work, under the title, *Triumph of Intolerance, or Anecdotes of the Life of Ambroise Borelly*. It was a popular, moving, and rapid narrative of the vexations, iniquities, and persecutions inflicted on the French Protestants. The volume was read, discussed, criticised. Then ensued deep commiseration for the lot of those human beings who were hunted down like wild beasts, because they obeyed

conscience, and prayed to God in good French, instead of bad Latin.

Six years after the publication of the *Triumph of Intolerance* frequently reprinted under the title of *The Old Covenant*, Lafayette, coming to Nîmes, gratified a desire he had long felt by paying a visit to his father, Paul Rabaut, to whom he tendered all his influence at Court in order to obtain a mitigation of the social state of the Protestants. One consequence was, that Rabaut Saint-Etienne went to Paris. There he put forth all his energy in collecting power, with a view to the contemplated change. In 1787 he received his reward, in a decree which at last guaranteed civil liberty to Protestants, proscribing the act of violence so long exercised against them as being opposed to the principles of reason and humanity, as much as to the true spirit of Christianity. This was a great step in advance. But it was not all. The edict proclaimed Catholicism the religion of the State, and granted to Protestants "only that which nature right does not allow to be refused." But the revolution was at hand. It came, and replaced toleration by equality and liberty restoring to Protestants their natural rights.

Rabaut Saint-Etienne was one of the eight representatives whom the municipality of Nîmes sent to the States-General. He took considerable part in the deliberations of the assembly, and rose to the highest eloquence in the discussions on liberty in religious opinions. Some members appearing to desire restrictions on the exercise of public worship in certain cases, he arose and called to mind the situation imposed on Protestants by Louis XIV., saying:—

"The Laws against their worship have not been abolished; in several provinces Protestants are reduced to celebrate their worship in deserts, exposed to the intemperance of the seasons, to conceal themselves as criminals, or to render the law ridiculous by evading it, and violating it day after day. Accordingly, while the Protestants are doing all they can for the good of their country, their country treats them with ingratitude; they serve it as citizens, it treats them as proscribed persons; they serve it as men whom you have made free, they are treated as slaves. But there is such a thing as a French nation, and to it I appeal. Does it demand intolerance? No; liberty is what it requires. Tolerance! What is it? Endurance, clemency, pardon; ideas supremely unjust towards dissidents. And this will be true so long as difference in religion, and difference in opinion are not crimes. Tolerance? Let the word be blotted out of our language, let it no more be heard from our lips. Tolerance I refuse from the hands of my fellow man. Error, gentlemen, is not a crime, it is a misfortune; he who is possessed of it holds it for truth; to him it is truth, and, being such in his eyes, he is bound to profess it. If so, no person, no society has or can have the right to close his lips. I then demand for French Protestants, for all the non-Catholics of the kingdom, liberty and equality before the laws."

The National Assembly, overcome by sound argument and natural eloquence, passed a law on the 13th of August, 1789, establishing freedom of worship in France. On the 10th of March, in the following year, the triumph of religious liberty was

consummated and honoured by the appointment of Rabaut-Saint-Etienne, President of the Assembly, in place of the Abbe Montesquiou. This promotion did not pass unnoticed.

"The honour paid to Mr. Rabaut," said the journal of the States General, "is a striking example that the dignity of the rights of man is deeply engraven on the hearts of the representatives of the nation. No more superstition! it is for ever annihilated among a people that raises a Roman priest and a Lutheran priest indifferently to the high position of presiding over the National Assembly, simply because they find virtue and merit in both. The contrast is remarkable; it is also fine, nay, it is grand; this is speaking by facts, of all speaking the best."

The President of the Assembly, Rabaut, wrote to his father, "The former 'pastor of the desert' is at your feet."

When the Assembly was dissolved, Rabaut remained at Paris, where he wrote for the official paper, *The Moniteur*, composing, among other things, his remarkable *Historical Outlines of the French Revolution*. On the 20th of September he founded "*La Feuille Villageoise*" (*The Village Visitor*), one of the most carefully edited and most interesting journals of the period. "To tranquillise minds by enlightening them, and, with due respect, to separate evangelical truths from Papal illusions—this," said the prospectus, "is our object. We are missionaries of concord." This noble mission Rabaut Saint-Etienne continued to carry on until he was sent to the Convention by the electors of the department of Aube. Joining the Girondists, he often attempted to restrain the violence of *La Montagne*. At the trial of Louis XVI., he made an unsuccessful effort to save the king from death. On the 23rd of January, 1793, the Convention paid homage to his character by placing him in its presidential chair. Already, alas! the party of terror was all powerful; the Girondists were proscribed. Rabaut shared their fate. Arrested in his own house, the second of June, he effected an escape, and sought refuge in the neighbourhood of Versailles. Outlawed on the 28th of July, he yet re-entered Paris, where some Catholics whom he had obliged sheltered him and his brother Rabaut-Pommier. Indiscretion on the part of the workmen who had constructed the hiding place disclosed their retreat to Fabre d'Eglantine, who lost no time in denouncing them to "The Committee of Public Safety." On the 4th of December he and his brother were apprehended, together with those who had found them a refuge. The next day, 5th December, 1793, he perished on the scaffold. "Down to his last hour," says another of his biographers, "he was the defender of right; at the moment when he was setting out for the place of execution, he thought of nothing but how he might save the life of an unfortunate man who was about to be guillotined, without having been tried or condemned." "Rabaut embraced me," said the innocent victim. "I saw his eyes fire with horror at this new kind of crime; he had forgotten the crime they were

committing on himself."—"Almanach de l'Union Protestante Libérale, 1868."

In comparison with this high, honourable, and useful life, the essence of which was sincerity and openness, the tone of the following, which makes concealment the duty of the minister of Christ, is in view of its author distressing, and in view of its morals hateful and repulsive.

"There are persons riveted as it were to absolute faith. I speak of men engaged in holy orders and exercising the cure of souls. Even then, a fine soul knows how to find issues. A worthy country priest by his solitary studies and the purity of his life has been led to see the impossibilities of the literal dogmatism. Ought he to sadden those whom he has hitherto comforted; to explain to the simple changes which they cannot understand? God forbid! The good Bishop Cosenso performed an act of honesty such as the church has never from its origin seen, by writing down his doubts as soon as they came to him. But the humble Catholic priest settled in a narrow and timid district ought to hold his tongue. O, how many discreet tombs around village churches thus conceal poetic reserves, angelic silences. Will those whose duty it has been to speak equal the merit of those secret ones known to God alone?"—"Les Apôtres Introduction, p. liii.

MAN CONTEMPLATED IN PRIVATE LIFE.

Why from the heights of public life should I not descend to my private circle? Let it be one of which I have personal knowledge. In what immediately follows only the names are fictional.

THE REV. JAMES SPENCER.

The Rev. James Spencer was advanced in age when I had the happiness to fall under his benevolent eye. The minister of a small but opulent and cultivated congregation, he stood high in general esteem, and received from his flock homage rarely paid even to excellent religious teachers. He was a scholar no less than a Christian. His manners were such as might be expected from one who had from his earliest years lived in polished society. Fond of the seclusion of his study, and fitted to adorn the intercourse of society, he spent much of his time in visiting his hearers at their own homes, including those of the humblest classes. Indeed, the poor, the untaught, the unbefriended were special objects of his fatherly attention. To the needy he liberally ministered out of pecuniary resources, the staple of which was a small private fortune, always guarding against a pauperising tendency in his beneficence; and, without parade or pious pretence, leading those whom he thus aided upwards from material good to the ever-growing and imperishable properties of a pure heart, a holy life, an everlasting hope. Distinguished by simplicity, goodness, and moral earnestness, rather than intellectual power, he was yet an able and effectual preacher. If there was any lack of imagination in his pulpit performances, it was amply compensated for by the ever-present influence of his truly religious life. Liberal in thought no less than large

of heart, he lived in friendly communion with members of all denominations. Christianity with him, as the constant presence in the heart and life of the living God and the living Christ, led him to be gentle and soothing, rather than even tolerant toward the doubting, friendly toward dissentients, peaceable and helpful toward all, whatever their creed or their no-creed. Yet his liberality never degenerated into indifference. He had a theology of his own, and he spared no proper pains to give that an opportunity of being accepted by others which he so highly valued himself. Scarcely need it be added that he was pre-eminently a just man. Purity of thought, simplicity of purpose, benevolence of aim, undemonstrative courtesy of manner, constituted the essence of his noble character. Of course he was beloved. He was indeed the quiet charm of every circle into which he went. In a word, he was to me so purely and thoroughly conscientious, and lived a life so continually in the felt presence of God, as to stand before my memory as spotless and all but perfect. I say "all but perfect" simply because he was a human being, for moral perfection belongs not to even the best of ordinary men. Yet here I speak from speculation rather than knowledge. Often, indeed, in looking back on one to whom I am inexpressibly indebted, I find the image so simple, so saintly, so loving, so Christ-like that I am led to fancy I must have been somewhat dazzled by his presence in my younger days, and so misled to ascribe to him more complete moral proportions than what were really his own. Yet I cannot allow the remark to pass without adding that it is extorted from me by that supreme deference to truth and reality which was so remarkable a feature in my ever-venerated friend. So long, however, as consciousness shall last, his stately form, his fine intelligent countenance, his mild and loving eye, his calm, manly, and unobtrusive bearing will ever and anon appear before me, moving up and down in public and in private duties, or making the pulpit impressive by his dignified presence, as one already belonging to a higher sphere.

Farewell, revered benefactor, the thought of thee has done much to give direction and earnestness to my life; the hope of reunion is among my brightest hopes and fairest prospects. Knowing thee, I could never think ill of human nature nor despair of its destinies.

But to see and study my race in its essential qualities I must turn aside from all external advantages, and contemplate it in what are accounted its lowlier forms.

THE FOUNDER OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Among the instances of the daily round of beneficent acts which entered into Mr. Spencer's life, and which now rise to my recollection, one eminently deserves a cursory notice.

I see him entering a small and mean shoe-mender's hut, in

one of the back thoroughfares of the town. It is a sight that might be had at least every week by any passer by. There he greets the occupant, who is on his seat busy at work—an old battered sailor, who, now “cast ashore,” earns a scanty subsistence as a cobbler—for of anything superior he is incapable. The very small room is filled with boys of from six to twelve years of age. They are ragged, but clean, and look as if barely fed. These, so to say, he has picked up in the streets; for, to use his own words, he “preferred the little vagabonds.” Others, he said, were in less need, and would more readily receive assistance. These poor, and, but for him, lost creatures, he taught to read, write, and cypher—and taught them well; for having no money to buy manuals, he taught them from his own head and with his own lips, not without inspiration and kindness from his own heart. It hardly need be said, that though the circle of information was small alike in pupil and teacher, yet the training was effective, and the boys became intelligent. What is better is, that they became moral, for they caught the earnest, and truthful, and benevolent spirit of their master. Little else could this humble philanthropist do for his “vagabonds;” yet many a pang of hunger did he appease, many a bare foot did he shoe, many a thinly-clad back did he cover and warm. Against frost and snow and hail, against long, dark wintry days, against lightning, thunder, and rain, against hopelessness and despair, he sheltered and comforted such boys as others despised and neglected, leaving some, no doubt, to perish of destitution.

For years that half-crippled shoemaker continued his benevolent work, apart from any aid or sympathy. A new era dawned on him the first day that he received a visit from Mr. Spencer. His entrance into the shed (rather than hut) was occasioned by his active and piercing eye detecting, as he passed, the figure of a boy standing with a leaf of a book in his hand (a leaf was all his teacher could supply) near a figure bending over his work, as if he were a cordwainer. His curiosity being awakened, Mr. Spencer, courteous to poor as well as rich, knocked at the door and asked if he might enter. “Yes,” was the answer; but the “yes” was prompt and hearty, for the speaker was known to the teacher, who had long attended his public services, and fed his own spirit with the spirit of the preacher. The contact of those two genuine men and faithful Christians was gratifying to both. The benefits that accrued to the teacher may be easily conceived. I shall not particularise them, for I am compelled to study brevity.

A concluding paragraph must tell how one day, years after the first interview, the minister was called away from the dinner table of the mayor of the town into the hall, where, to his infinite grief, he saw his esteemed friend and fellow-worker, the shoemaker, prostrate on the marble floor. He had come on invita-

tion from its master to spend an hour with Mr. Spencer in the mansion. The present was not the first time he had enjoyed the privilege. But his term of earthly enjoyment had come to an end. Whether from the little excitement occasioned by the visit or not, he had no sooner entered the house than he fell down and died, without a struggle and without a groan. He had done his day's work, and went to his high and enduring reward.

The originator of ragged schools could not but receive a cordial greeting from the lips of Him who, while in this visible state, said :—

“TAKE HEED THAT YE DESPISE NOT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES; FOR I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT THEIR ANGELS DO ALWAYS BEHOLD THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.”—(Matt. xviii. 10.)

The next figure is no “originator,” no “founder,” but a simple artisan, a disciple of the Rev. J. Spencer.

A SHIP CARPENTER.

C. B., born in Hampshire, of a family superior only in its genuine Saxon blood, possessed the virtues proper to the Saxon character,—home affection, simplicity, cordiality, piety. Lowly in origin, he, till near the last quarter of his octogenarian existence, depended mainly on combined hand and head labour for his own sustenance and the support and education of his family. Even comparatively was the tenor of his days, free from the distractions of ambition and the deprivations of greed, for he lived solely for God, Christ, and duty. In about the middle era of his life he underwent a great religious change, which, whatever it cost him, and much as its results solaced his later days, was after all but superficial, for it left untouched the deep and lucid waters of his inmost thought and sentiment. Indeed his piety was too engrained in his nature to be open to serious modification by any influence coming from without, especially if it came after mature manhood was reached. Religion with him was the spirit of Christ, considered as the embodiment and representation of God, his Father, and the Father of all men. As such it was a sentiment, a pure and lofty sentiment, but a sentiment which enriched his nature so as to prompt, control, guide, and refine his actions. A power so intimate and so active preserved him from selfishness, and made the course of his existence one continued outflow of gratitude to God and goodwill to man. With him, in consequence, obedience to God's laws and acquiescence in his will was the natural and comparatively easy result of a soul too thankful and too elevated to be ill at ease about perishable things, or to find in their alternations trials too hard to bear, or in their allurements temptations too difficult to overcome. Hence his wonderful equanimity. Though he lived on till his eighty-fourth year, no murmur ever passed his lips; rarely and slightly was his

brightness dimmed ; his tongue was without gall, even as his heart was without guile ; he had an excuse or an attenuation for everyone's faults except his own, on which he was unduly severe. Serene and tranquil was the flow of that stream, especially as it neared the boundless ocean. Nor less were its waters full of good to each and all of the family circle. Loving and respecting the heads of the family in which his last years were spent, he was the cheerful companion of the children so long as strength endured, and when he could no longer walk down the lanes gathering wild flowers for them, when he could no longer teach them the note peculiar to each bird, and the leaf, branch, and colour that characterised the several trees of the field, he had a knee for this girl and another knee for that boy, as he sat in his "Old Arm-chair," and told now a story and now an anecdote touching things which, in boyhood, youth, and manhood, he had seen with his eyes or experienced in his heart.

With the domestics, and with persons of that class, he was a special favourite. Kind to every one, he was considerate and genial toward such as were beneath himself in the artificial distinctions of society. He seemed as if he desired to compensate them for the neglect or severity they had to endure from others.

With these dispositions and habits passed his declining years, in placid content and serene satisfaction, assured all the while that his present was but a dim forecast of his future. In that future he had one great hope, which, earthly in its origin, yet refined and beautified by the religion of Jesus, became to him a morning star, rising and shining more brilliantly and more cheerfully as the shadows on his path grew longer and darker. That hope was his departed wife, the thought of whom, while it solaced earth, made heaven lovely and desirable in his eyes. The reunion which he waited for so patiently and looked for so hopefully has long since taken place ; and both husband and wife now know what on earth they could only believe :

"Nor shall the glowing flame expire
When Nature droops her sickening fire ;
Then shall they meet in realms above,
A heaven of joy because of love."

Farewell, loving and beloved "grandfather," thou wert practical sage of the true Christian stamp, having no higher position in this artificial world than that of "The Carpenter" himself. (Mark vi. 3.) Would that not only "working men" but men of all classes, were as single in heart and as pure in life as thou. How happy then the world, and how fully would the purposes of a wise and benignant Providence be accomplished even on this side the tomb. Yet not so rare as one fears are examples of such personal excellence and domestic peace in England of ours, so favoured and honoured of the Heaven

Father. Farewell ; ere long I shall be assured that thou lookest even now leniently (as was always thy wont) on the imperfections of these memorial lines.

A DECREPID COLLIER.

Were I to give, however, faint outlines of all the great men in humble life that I have had the happiness to know, I should fill a volume of considerable size. One more must be spoken of.

A few years since I received a letter from a Durham collier, till then a total stranger to me. The communication, the style and spelling of which attested its genuineness, requested religious information on an important subject. Not having time to write in full, I sent to the applicant a volume of some small value. The gift called forth his gratitude so as to lead to a long and somewhat frequent correspondence, in which my friend has done his best to prevent me from having any superiority in the way of presents. Struck with simple disinterestedness and manly independence, so marked, I resolved on having an interview. Without any notice I one day called at his cottage. Its master was in the mine and I could not see him, but I saw the clean and neatly furnished house, with its bright hearth, and bright mistress, and yet brighter daughter, surrounded by her gleeful brood of little children. A day or two after the collier dined at the house where I was a guest. He was a plainly but decently dressed old man, bent and lamed by his employment, but erect in spirit, calm in manner, respectful to others as well as himself in bearing, intelligent, and undemonstratively devout. In the course of conversation I learnt many particulars of his history. These I shall not recite, but I cannot wholly pass over the earnestness with which he had sought religious truth, and the simple fidelity with which he had turned his growing light to a practical account. Adding what I afterwards learnt to what I then learnt, I may describe him as the Christian benefactor of his neighbourhood. Though anything but what the world would call a scholar, he taught the ignorant, and he taught his own children, and then his grandchildren, communicating to them the rudiments of knowledge in such a way as to enable all to rise in the best elevation, the elevation of character, and to enable one even to work his way forwards until he became a minister in the Established Church. Conscious rectitude makes a man bold as well as strong. Accordingly my friend reproofs the vicious, warns the foolish, strives to recover the erring, as well as circulates around him the best books of various kinds, nor least of religion, he can procure, ever preserving a mild and gentle tone which wins by perseverance, and never forgets others' rights in asserting its own prerogatives. Wide-hearted in religion, he is on good terms with its ministers and professors of all denominations, while none the less is he faithful and consistent in the utterance and maintenance of his

own views, which he values in the degree in which they have cost him pains and sacrifices, not unaccompanied, however, by an ample repayment of light, strength, and satisfaction. Attending Episcopalian worship as often as opportunity serves, he is mostly found, and that not on the seventh day only, in "the church which is in his own house," Col. iv., 15, "where prayer is wont to be made," where the Bible is intelligently read, and where hymns of praise are sung by the mature and the aged in adoration, morning and night, and where all day long from time to time the children express their bounding spirits and overflowing glee in hymns and poems fraught with gratitude to God and goodwill to man.

Latterly his wife has suffered from declining health, so much as to impair her mental faculties and even to make her a dangerous inmate of the house. A kind friend, with not undue prudence, suggested that she should be put under proper supervision. To this he replied :—

"I will not take anything you may say amiss as regards my poor old wife. She interferes with no one but myself, and I should think it very hard if they were to take her from me. We have been forty-two years together, in which time we have had our ups and downs, and she always wished to carry half the burden, come what might; and she has been ever true and kind, at times having a little too much of that unruly member that St. James speaks about; but what of all that, she is my Nancy, and I love her, and I will love her till I die, even if it should be by her own hand. I fear not; I put my trust in Providence. I hope she will not hurt any one else. I am happy to say she has been better this last week. To-day she is taken very wild; but I love my Nancy well."—(Feb. 23rd, 1868.) "Poor thing, this morning, when I came from work, she said she wished I would always stay with her. She talks stupidly, but is always very kind when she comes right."—(Feb. 29th, 1868.)

Such is the Biblical view of man in his origin, his character, his condition, his destiny. Where can a parallel be found? Where can anything be found worthy to occupy a second or third place in regard to it? This is indeed "Glad tidings of great joy," and that the rather because it is "unto all people."

CONSCIENCE AMONG THE GENTILES.

For the Scripture prolongs the line of God's providential love to man even into the pagan world. A father's moral relations extend to all his children; nor will the end come until every child of God is ruled by God's will and blessed by God's presence.—(1 Cor., xv. 25 seq.)

Here it must suffice to show the existence and operation of conscience among the heathen by a few thoughts and one example. The Scriptural testimony is emphatic :—

"When the Gentiles, which have not the law (of Moses) do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."—(Rom. ii. 14, 15.)

he Greek and Latin classics abound in passages speaking
tively on the point. Only a specimen can be given :—

The most daring, convicted of conscience, becomes the most timid.”—
under.

Great is the strength you gain when conscience approves what you do.”—
ocles.

O wretched Orestes, what disorder is killing thee! Conscience, for I
too well the evils I have done.”—Euripides.

is being asked, “What living thing is free from fear?” answered, “A
conscience.”

riander being asked, “What is the greatest in the least?” replied, “An
ent mind in a human body.”

e same, when asked, “What is liberty?” said, “A good conscience.”

A mind conscious of rectitude laughs at calumny.”—Ovid.

This crime eats out my heart, torturing mind and body.”—Plautus.

A bad conscience is a galling load.”—Cicero.

To be conscious of meaning well is the greatest consolation in trouble ;
free from fault is a supreme solace.”—Cicero.

Look to your conscience rather than your repute, for repute is often
g, conscience never.”—Seneca.

A bad conscience is often safe, but never secure.”—Seneca.

have no difficulty in selecting my example of its existence
operation among the Gentiles. Many good men, some great
well as good, live in the annals of Greece and Rome, an
our to their respective countries, an honour and a light to all
terity ; but no one bears away the palm from

SOCRATES,

THE PHILOSOPHIC MARTYR.

he subject takes me into a period of national decline. The
ple manners and heroic prowess of primitive ages have passed
y. Athens, having become great in war and renowned in art
literature, has felt the degenerating influence of dominion
luxury. Religion, having lost its seat in human intelligence,
also lost its empire over the human heart. The gods of
quity, having sunk into poetic creations, are now regarded as
ons and falsities by the thinking few, while they are still
dly feared and openly defied by the superstitious many. The
of religion was the relaxation of virtue. Morality, no longer
ed on religion, sank to a matter of selfish calculation, or of
om and convenience. Self-enjoyment became the order of
day. The higher life of man was mastered and held in
dage by the lower. Intellect and character were enslaved to
ie. Licentiousness ran riot. Home had parted with its
city. The highest womanly attractions were made a pander
ust, and a crime against humanity (paiderastia, or the base
of male youth), sapped the very foundations of manliness
citizenship. Scarcely more than one virtue stood erect ; but
e the patriotism of Athens retained much of the strength and
ur which had beaten back Xerxes at the head of his innu-

merable hosts and still held the lead in Greece, obtained by those deathless victories, it was too superficial, too much restricted to a single state, and too much an affair of sentiment and habit to meet the deeper wants and wider sympathies of a new and more liberal age, and so it proved insufficient to protect the country against the internal treachery and foreign usurpation to which it ere long fell a prey.

Amidst the general degeneracy art and literature continued to flourish ; but art and literature, though they may throw a garland of flowers around the head, cannot infuse the streams of a new life into a nation's heart, for they are the expressions and images of what a people is, rather than the sources and presages of what it ought to be.

In the decay of religion there is only one hope for a people. Philosophy, in revising the religious forms of the past, may discover and publish higher and purer conceptions of God and of God's relations to man. At least, this is what it has from time to time attempted to do in the history of the world. The attempt again repeated in our own days promises little more success than it gained in the days of Socrates. At that time the task was in the hands of a class of men whose very name is a permanent and ineffaceable reproach. Of late, indeed, an historian of no mean repute has undertaken to vindicate the sophists from the charges under which they have laboured for above a thousand years. The spirit of fairness, the exact learning, and the dialectical skill which Mr. Grote has employed in the labour are worthy of high praise ; but, although he has relieved them from a load of exaggeration, he leaves the chief features of their character unrelieved of their merited odium.

The sophists, the great and almost sole public teachers of Athens, while renouncing the superstitions of the people, possessed no idea of a living and true God, the fountain and source of truth, justice, benevolence, and patriotism, the essential reality of which they could not in consequence recognise. Shut out from the inner world of spirit, they regarded the outer and visible world as all that was known to man. Consequently virtue was no less a transient form than the rising and setting sun, and truth ascended to no higher position than the opinions of this individual and that generation. Hence universal uncertainty, doubt, and denial ; and hence, too, universal debate and discussion. Society became the mere ebb and flow of the great ocean of phenomenal life. The regulation of its movements fell into the hands of the cleverest pilot. To form men for the task was the specific office of the sophists. As their name indicates, they were the wise men of the day. Professing to know everything, they undertook to teach all how to think right, to act right, and specially to govern right. Uniting at once the functions of the modern thinker, the newspaper essayist, and the pulpiteer, they held in their hands the

great formative influences of the day. Had they been inspired by a vital religion and sound morality, they might have saved the State from impending ruin. As it was, their ministry was one of little else than gilded selfishness. The talkers of the world themselves, they did little else than teach others to talk, and that on all sides, no less for than against the same propositions; with a view rather to self-glorification in victory than the promotion of moral excellence in the discovery of truth. Such an outpouring of empty sound would have been impossible even on the part of Greeks, had not hair-splitting speculation multiplied topics indefinitely, and thrown darkness over all, instead of creating light. Under those masses of cloud good sense was overwhelmed, and philosophy quitted the earth. Fancy, fiction, word-lore, and trifling, became supreme and universal even among the less uncultivated members of society. There would have yet remained something sound in the national character had the sophists studied and taught for the love of knowledge and the love of man. Instead, mercenary in their spirit, they turned philosophy into a source of gain. Travelling up and down the land, and tarrying for a time now at this centre and now at that, they offered their wares in the public market, undertook to make men wise and able citizens and rulers, according to a tariff liberal and capable of indefinite expansion, and with their arts of display, their boundless pretensions, and their ludicrous failures, resembled the mountebanks rather than the instructors of their age.

But, in God's Providence, midnight foretells the dawn of day. The vanity and arrogance of the sophists, which made true knowledge impossible, and placed virtue in self-gratification, were about to be undermined and superseded by the practical good sense and lofty morality of one, the general character of whose influence was described when it was said of him, that he brought philosophy down from heaven to live and move in the haunts of men.

Socrates, whose age may be fixed between the years 469 and 399 before the Christian era, was the son of the sculptor, Sophroniscus, and the midwife, Phaenareté, both of Athens. The son chose the profession of his father. Centuries after his death, the statues of two graces, the product of his own chisel, stood on a conspicuous point in the famous city. Coming from ancestors who, though moving in what we should term the middle class of social life, belonged to an ancient race, and were in full enjoyment of civil rights, Socrates received that superior training of body and mind which the state of Athens was so wise as to provide for all its citizens, in suitable public institutions. To the discipline he underwent in the national schools he was indebted for the bodily health and strength which made him able to bear severe labour, exposure, and privation—a power which he

took pains to sustain and increase by moderation, abstinence from sensual pleasures, and a natural manner of living, so that on the march and in battle he was not inferior in valour and efficiency to any of his fellow-citizens.

The instruction in poetry and music which formed a part of school education, the musical contests on occasions of joyous religious festivals, the brilliant performances of masterpieces of tragedy and comedy, public life on the Exchange, in the court of justice, and in the popular assemblies, the public lectures of the sophists and sages, contained so many elements of culture that gifted natures easily made themselves masters of the high-civilisation of the day. They had scarcely more to do than keep their eyes and ears open in order to receive streams of intelligence and refinement. And that Socrates largely profited from these advantages, and regarded society itself as a university, no less as a gymnasium, appears clear from the information we possess of the kind of life he led when he had exchanged his father's business for the high office of a public teacher. He spent a large part of every day in the public squares, the places of literary training, the gymnastic areas, the shady walks so favourable to conversation, and in the markets crowded with busy men and women in the full bustle of active life. Here he was at home, and here he held his school, speaking and conversing with everyone whose ear he could gain, with a diligence, earnestness and constancy which showed how high was the value he attached to correct and lofty thoughts, pure sentiments, and noble aims. On convenient occasions he extended his visits to the workshop of artisans, the studios of artists, nor neglected the refined circle of higher life, discoursing no less with people of the humble position than with statesmen and warriors, neither despising the poor nor flattering the rich, but steadily and zealously endeavouring to benefit all. In particular, he strove to gain attention from the young, especially of the class in whose hands chiefly lay the great interests of the state. Ere long he had gathered around him a number of youths eager for instruction, who, attracted by his high-toned inspiration, accompanied him in his walks, hung upon his words, and treasured up his thoughts. It was a kind of spontaneous, free, and open gathering of listeners and speaker every day different, yet every day the same. The scholars came because they loved and found instruction. The teacher taught because with him teaching was no less a delight than a duty. It scarcely needs be said that pecuniary recompense was neither given nor expected. The golden words that fell from the master's lips brought their reward in their utterance, and the frugal life needed little and had the little it needed. "I consider," he was accustomed to say, "that to have no wants something divine, and to want the least possible is to be near to God."

The entrance of Socrates into public was extraordinary and striking, and had something strange and even comical to the untaught crowd and the superficial spectator. Nature had not been gracious to his person. He often amused himself with his friends over his unhandsome figure. His short, stumpy, and upturned nose, his outstanding eyes, his protruding lips, his squat and broad-shouldered chest, and his prominent paunch, reminded the spectator of the half-bestial god, Silenus. These unsightly features, however, did not correspond amiss with his plain and inartificial style of speech, in which humour, banter, sarcasm, and irony were veiled under simplicity, and a genuinely popular tone was enlivened with parables, proverbs, and snatches of poetry. When in a circle of distinguished youth, which generally formed his audience, and against whose rich attire and genteel air his shabby and neglected appearance formed a strange contrast; he came forward in the public streets, often stopping suddenly, as if absorbed in some thought by which he had been seized, and looking around him in apparent half-alienation of mind, the sight was so unusual, so grotesque, so out of keeping with the overflowing beauty and artistic elegance of Athenian life around, as to relieve us from the wonder, which would else be natural, that the comic writer, Aristophanes, the "Punch" and the "Fun" of his day, should place him on the stage as the representative of the sophists, whose great assailant he was; and with a view to raise the public laugh against those ambitious pretenders, exhibit him, with his personal peculiarities carefully imitated, measuring the leaps of a flea in a basket, suspended from the ceiling of the theatre. However different the descriptions which Xenophon and Plato, his most famous disciples, have left us of their master, they yet agree in the principal features they give. If the first declares "Socrates was so pious that he did nothing without the gods, so just that he never in the least injured any one, so much master of himself that he never chose the pleasant instead of the good, so intelligent that he never made a mistake in deciding between the better and the worse," and, at the end, calls him "the best and happiest of men;" the second praises him as a model of endurance and self-command, as full of piety and patriotism, as full of unbending fidelity to conviction, as a judicious and trustworthy adviser of his friends; but, before all, as the unwearying "sculptor (alluding to his profession) of men," who seized every opportunity to form his companions to solid and practical virtues, to lead all with whom he came in contact to self-knowledge, and to counteract the conceit and frivolity of the sophists. But neither in the one nor the other does Socrates appear invested with ascetic or ideal perfections. He is in thought, sentiment, and life an Athenian, who does not disown the claims of the senses, while successfully withstanding their excesses; who seeks the society of handsome young men, but

scorns the Greek licentiousness ; who enjoys the pleasures of opulent hospitality, yet on the morrow resumes his customary self-denial with a contented and cheerful spirit. His principle of distinction, however, lies in his calm, consistent, and thorough preference of the inner life to the outer ; the world of mind to the world of sense, principle to custom, duty to pleasure, the future to the present. In his teachings his constant aim was to lead his scholars to the essence of things. He taught them to see in the body only an instrument of the soul ; and in consequence, to place the object of existence not in the satisfaction of physical wants, but in the development of the moral faculties. Whence that practical spiritualism set by Socrates in opposition to the gross materialism of his contemporaries. He taught them that there is within us a light which we behold in virtue of self-contemplation, by unfolding our reason and probing our conscience. He taught them, by means of this light, that the distinction of just and unjust, good and bad, is not as the sophists said, an arbitrary distinction, founded on form and custom, but real, substantial, and permanent ; that above conventional right there is the absolute right, and absolute justice ; above written laws, the unwritten laws of God ; and that in these, not those, the foundation of justice among men is to be sought. Finally, he taught them to rise on the wings of human intelligence to the Supreme Intelligence—the principle, the source, and the support of nature and humanity, the invisible and incorruptible judge of the wise and omnipotent ruler of man.

Such, in general, was the moral doctrine which Socrates opposed to the philosophy of his age, and by which he endeavoured to purify religion, correct morals, and humanise politics.

In religion, he wished to supplant a rank polytheism, with its material and licentious worship, by a pure monotheism, and worship alike moral and spiritual.

One feature in his religious history deserves more than ordinary attention. He believed that, especially on great occasions, he received visits from a spiritual power, by whose voice he was led to good by being turned aside from evil. This was a natural result of the inwardness of his religion. Thus he told his countrymen, in language they could understand, that "the spirit of man is led by the Spirit of God," that the inner light is the true light, and that conscience is supreme—as in its directions so is its authority.

The virtues which he taught in word he honoured and observed in action. Unhappy in his domestic relations, he was equally patient and imperturbable. An ancient story tells how, when after being driven out of doors by hard words from Xantippé, his wife, he, as he was stepping over the threshold, received on his head a pail of water from her hands. Thereupon he quietly remarked that thunder often brought rain. He practised

civic as well as the individual and domestic virtues. At the siege of Potidea he saved the life of Alcibiades at the risk of his own, and caused the prize of valour which he had earned himself to be decreed to his pupil and friend. At the battle of Delium, seeing Xenophon fall from his horse into the midst of the enemy, he rushed forwards and bore him on his shoulders to a place of safety, pursued by the foe. On one occasion when he presided over the National Assembly, certain admirals, who had gained the battle of Arginusae, were brought before the tribunal accused of having neglected to gather up the dead as they floated on the sea. On several grounds the charge was unjust and illegal. Socrates sternly refused to be made an instrument of the fury of the people, though his fellow magistrates yielded to their clamour and threats. "Do as you please," said he, "but I will not put to the vote the proposition for their death, since it is contrary to the law." His resistance proved nugatory. The conquerors were rewarded with death.

The conduct of Socrates under the usurpation of the thirty tyrants (as they were called) was equally admirable. Critias, who had been one of his disciples, was among the number. He had been reprovved by the master on account of his immoralities. In order to take his revenge, the pupil got a law passed which forbade teaching the arts of speech. Socrates, notwithstanding, went on his old way, not forgetting to say what he thought of the conduct of the thirty. Critias and his colleague Charicles, thereupon sent for Socrates. "Do you know the law?" they asked. "You are no longer to corrupt the young. Disobey, and Athens will lose a troublesome citizen." He bowed, retired, and continued his course. The same Critias had resolved on the ruin of Leo of Salamis, whose property he lusted for. "Go and seize him," said the tyrant. "It is not my work," replied the sage.

By these acts of lofty virtue Socrates did his best to restore the credit of philosophy, which the sophists had brought into disrepute. But he was too highminded and too pure for his age. The same spirit which stoned the prophets in Judea, rewarded the philosopher of Athens with a cup of hemlock.

It is easy to see how Socrates must have stirred up against himself a crowd of enemies. The novelty of his ideas and his inflexible equity would have sufficed. There were, first, the conservatives of the time, whose prejudices he wounded, and whose habits of thought and deed he discomposed. Then there were the priests. True, he even carried to excess respect for the established worship. But he was known to disbelieve the old fables, and he taught a religion, reasonable, pure, and holy. The temple and the altar were in danger. The innovator must be put to silence. Again, there was the tyrannical government whose iniquity we have seen him withstand, and whose deadly wrath he had provoked. Moreover, the sophists hated him as their rival,

and resolved to slay him as their assailant. Lastly, he was pleasing to the demagogues of Athens, who did their utmost influence the minds of the people to his disadvantage. There was some feasibility in the charge made against him of corrupting the young. The ancient democracy, restored by Thrasybulus, regarded him as the head of the sophists, out of whose school they said, proceeded the tyranny under which the state groaned. Were not Critias, Theramenes, Alcibiades, the opponents of the people and the founders of the oligarchy, disciples of Socrates? He who could send forth such scholars must possess bad principles. The evil must be cut up by the root. The only way to save Athens was to destroy Socrates.

The war had commenced many years before. Its leader Aristophanes, as already intimated. Socrates had taught the true God. This was to deny the gods of Athens. What was then, but an Atheist? The imputation was colourable enough for the play-writer, and, in consequence, Socrates was presented to the Athenians on the stage, branded, in "The Clouds," with the odious charge of atheism. "Tell me, I pray you," says Strepsiades, "is not Olympian Jupiter God?" "What Jupiter replies Socrates; "you are laughing, there is no Jupiter." The charge of corrupting the youth runs through the comedy. These are the two accusations on which he was formally put on trial. The indictment terminated with the words: "Punish him death."

The first charge, with the annexed penalty, suffices to prove that at Athens there was a State religion, which was guarded with extreme intolerance. Already Anaxagoras—that thinker of whom Aristotle had said, that by rising to a Supreme Intelligence which governs the universe, he also preserved his senses in the midst of the delirium of his contemporaries—already Anaxagoras, accused of impiety, had escaped from death solely owing to the favour of Pericles; he was, however, banished from Athens, after a residence there of a quarter of a century. Diagoras of Melos, one of the sophists who preceded Socrates, equally accused of impiety, escaped death only by flight. He was declared guilty in his absence, and condemned to death, a price was set upon his head, one talent being offered to whosoever should kill him, two talents to whosoever should deliver him up alive. At a later day Aristotle, in his turn accused of impiety, quitted Athens, in order, as he said, to spare the Athenians a second crime against philosophy.

The first crime to which he thus alluded was the death of Socrates. The charge of impiety was that which was fatal to the philosopher; and, doubtless, he was guilty. He was guilty of teaching a religion more pure than that of his fellow-citizens, of obeying a new divinity—a divinity which spoke to him in conscience. He was also guilty of teaching the youth a moral

to which their ears were not accustomed—a pure and lofty morality which, having the true God for its source and centre, was the very sap of human life, the palladium of cities, the guardian, the light, and the hope of the world. Guilty? Yes, guilty, and as guilty, so by law worthy of death!

Socrates, now sinking under the burden of three score years and ten, hardly cared to live any longer, being uncertain, as he said, whether it were better to live or to die. In consequence, he regarded the result of his impeachment with comparative indifference. Urged by his friend, Hermogenes, to think of his defence, "What else," he replied, have I thought of all my life?" "How?" "By living so as not to commit the slightest injustice." "But have you not observed how the courts often put to death innocent persons, whose defence displeased them, while they acquit guilty persons, whose words moved their compassion or flattered their ears?" "Twice, to say the truth, I have attempted to draw up a defence," he replied, "and twice the Divinity within me forbade." "Your words astound me." "Why so, if the Divinity judges it better for me to quit life without delay?" Plato represents him as addressing his judges in these terms:

"If you said to me, Socrates, we regret the penalty proposed by your accusers, and send you away acquitted, but on condition that you discontinue your usual course, I should reply—Athenians, I honour and love you, but I must obey God rather than my countrymen. Do as my accusers desire! a hundred deaths would not turn me aside from the path of duty."

Having been declared guilty by a bare majority, he had (by law) the right of condemning himself to one of three penalties—Perpetual imprisonment, banishment, or fine. Instead, he condemned himself to be supported at the public cost for the remainder of his days, like the conquerors at the Olympic games. His words contained a reproach which irritated his judges deeply. Accordingly, after a fresh deliberation, they condemned him to death. This is what he expected, and for which he was quite prepared. He went away from the face of his judges with the serenity of a man who had just fulfilled a solemn duty. One of his friends, Apollodorus, saying to him, in tears, that it was intolerable to see him die thus unjustly: "would you," Socrates replied, "prefer seeing me die guilty?" His friends devised means for his escape from prison, and entreated him to save his life by flight. "No," he said, "I cannot disobey the law." Crito urged his compliance. "Let the matter be as it is, my dear Crito, and let us follow the road marked out for us of God."

When the fatal day came, he calmly discoursed with his associates on the immortality of the soul, which, however, appears to have been with him a hope rather than a certainty. But here I must borrow the words of Plato:—

"Already the sun was going down; the executioner entered and said to

him, 'Socrates, I hope I shall not have to blame you as I have to blame others, who, the moment I come to announce to them by order of the magistrates that they must drink the poison, fall into a passion and curse me; but you, ever since you have been here, I have always found the best, most gentle and most courageous of all who have come into this prison, and at this moment I am sure you are not angry with me, but with those who are the cause of your calamity, and whom you know well. Now you know what come to announce; farewell; try to bear with resignation what is inevitable. Then turning away, he burst into tears and withdrew. Socrates, following him with his eyes, replied: 'Yes; adieu, I will do as you say.' Then turning to us, he added: 'See what worth there is in that man; all the time I have been here he has come to see me often, and has conversed with me, and now he good heart weeps for me. But come, Crito, let us obey him with a good grace; bring me the poison if it is mixed,—if not, let it mix itself.' 'Now,' replied Crito, 'the sun is still on the mountains, be not in haste, you have time to spare.' 'I want no delay; do not longer distress me, give me the cup.' At these words, Crito made a sign to the slave in attendance, who brought the hemlock. 'Right, my friend,' said Socrates, as he received from his hand; 'but when I have drunk it, what then?' 'Walk up and down until you feel your legs get heavy, then lie down on your bed.' 'But may I not spill a little on the ground for a libation?' 'We mix only what is necessary,' was the reply. 'Anyway, I may ask the gods to send a blessing on my journey. This I do; may they hear my prayers.' Then putting the cup to his lips, he emptied it with tranquillity and gentleness.

"Down till now," continues Plato, "nearly all of us had had power enough to restrain our tears; but when we saw him drink the poison, we were no longer masters of ourselves. For me, in spite of all my efforts, my tears flowed so plentifully that I covered my head with my mantle, that I might weep unseen; for it was not the calamity of Socrates I bewailed, but my own." Crito, unable to contain himself, had left the dungeon; and Apollodorus passed from weeping to sobbing and crying so terribly as almost to break the heart of every one but Socrates, who said: 'What are you doing, my friends? was it not to avoid these things that I sent the women away? Be still, be firm.' These words made us blush, and we suppressed our tears.

"After walking up and down for a time, Socrates remarked that he felt his legs growing heavy, and laid himself down on his back, as the slave had requested. At the same time the man approached, and, after an examination, said to us—'The chill is stiffening his limbs; it will soon gain his heart, and then Socrates will have left us.' Hearing these words, the sufferer uncovered his head and said (these were his last words), 'Crito, we owe a cock to the god of healing on account of my recovery (*i.e.*, by death), forget not to pay the debt.' 'It shall be done,' replied Crito, 'but have you nothing else to say?' There was no reply. Shortly after a convulsive movement made itself felt. His eyes fixed themselves. They were closed by Crito.

"Such was the end of our friend, the best man I ever knew—the wisest and most just of men."

Yes; Plato's verdict shall be ours. Socrates was wise, good, and just. He was more; he was one of the great teachers of our race, one of its most useful benefactors. He served his kind during his life, he served it also in his death. Accordingly, though he left not behind him a single line, he now stands high in the ranks of philosophy, and a higher position even than that does he hold as the principal philosophic martyr. He lost his life in obedience to conscience; he lost it because he had sought for truth, simply and lovingly, and because he would not keep back the truth he had found. Other pagans may have seen

farther, no one ever followed more faithfully the light he possessed. Had his words all perished, his memory would have remained one of the glories and one of the blessings of the human race.

The single life of Socrates vindicates humanity. That race is not mean and worthless which gave birth to so just and virtuous a man. What Socrates was all may become. The altitude of his character condemns the Renan theory of average mediocrity. He stands high enough to be singular, and not too high to be a model. At a similar moral elevation thousands, nay millions, have stood, whose names have perished for want of a herald. In his lofty character there was nothing which cannot be reached by ordinary men situated in the vales of life. Yet Socrates is greater than Renan's Christ, if only because his character was simple, transparent, and thoroughly honest. "Nothing is pure that comes from impure man, least of all religion," is Renan's canon in his "Philosophy of History." The rule is set aside by the life of Socrates. He was pure, and yet he was a religious reformer, even more than a philosopher. Nor can the theorem be sustained even in appearance except by the loophole of the absolute; for, of course, absolute goodness, which belongs to God only, and which even Jesus denied of himself (Matt. xix., 17), cannot be ascribed to any man, not even to Socrates. And yet Renan, if he chose to scrape together certain morsels of historical filth, might, with his false principles of historical composition, his command over inuendo, and the marvellous flexibility of his style, not impossibly succeed in bringing down the moral elevation of Socrates to a level with that of his own Christ.

The least that might have been expected is that Christ should have been made equal to Socrates by Renan. A strange historical canon is that which, leaving Socrates uncurtailed, brings Christ down to the lower levels of moral life, not to say to the lowest. But then, Christ is said to have wrought miracles. Moreover, certain events wear a miraculous aspect. These, his historian must find or make an explanation for. "Gross deceptions" is too offensive a phrase wherewith to characterise them. Yet such they were. Some roundabout way of saying this must be discovered. Accordingly, we are told, the disciples get up the fraud, and Jesus lends his aid in its execution. Anyway, miracle must be set at nought, for science has marked it with her brand. But, if one form of the supernatural must be disallowed, why not another? If the miracles of Jesus make us lower him morally, why not lower Socrates on account of his belief in God, and his hope of a real individual life beyond the tomb? And if you spare Socrates, notwithstanding what you consider his superstition, why smite Jesus on that very ground?

Another lesson Renan may learn from the life of Socrates. Human life in general, he teaches, is a moral and social chaos. Providence? No; there is no Providence if thereby is meant a

wise and good Ruler of the earth. Was not Socrates put to death unjustly?

He was; yet notice the words of Xenophon:—

“He was the most happy of all mankind.”

And, verily, I doubt it not. Having lived according to the laws of his nature, which are the laws of God, and having accordingly expanded and developed all the great possibilities of that nature, he was, as a matter of course, happy, and perhaps all the happier because he was strengthened, nerved, and refined in battling with ignorance, calumny, injustice, and violence. The highest type of happiness ensues from struggle and conflict, provided always your foes are God's foes; that is, an evil of some kind or other.

The fundamental character of the ministry of Socrates would be passed over did I not throw into relief one central feature of it. Though in contrast with the sophists, Socrates declined the position of a professional moral instructor, yet, in reality, he so taught and so lived as to promote a great moral reformation in individuals and in society. And this amendment and renewal he effected by operating directly on the inner life; thus, theoretically and practically, owning that moral changes, to be thorough and permanent, must begin within. He did not, indeed, go down into the depths of our being so as to discover and recognise sin as the cause of our disorders and woes, but he did, emphatically, behold and declare moral unsoundness as the one great evil which had to be cured, and moral soundness as the great good which had to be gained. Having wrought out the transmutation for himself, he desired to aid others in the duty and the task of accomplishing a similar renewal in and for themselves. Thus, practically admitting man's individual perfectibility, he implicitly taught the perfectibility of the human species; and making self-cure and self-development the aim of every man's existence, he truly acted the part of a saviour to his generation, and, through them, to his race. It is, of course, a moral salvation he proposed and achieved; but a moral salvation, at least when inspired of God, is the true salvation, precisely because it is the realisation of man's true and highest good. And here the influence of Socrates was so intrinsic, so real, so remedial, so fostering, so expanding, and so elevating, as to carry him in advance of all other pagan teachers and to place him at no very great distance from Christ himself. And thus while we are led to see and acknowledge God's fatherly Providence over offshoots of the Aryan stock, commonly shut out from his “covenanted mercies,” we are also led to believe in the possibility of the towering altitude of the Son of Mary, by contemplating the height attained by the son of Phaenareté. Jesus is not as one of those unhappy heroes whom England honours, after death, by placing their statue on the top of a lofty column, where, if “to memory dear,” they are totally

“lost to sight” in cloud, mist, and smoke; nor is he one of those miserable pillar saints who, of old, tried to burn out of themselves all human dross, by exposing their unsheltered heads to the ardours of an Eastern sky, on some towering and all but inaccessible shaft; but he is a man among men, higher indeed than all, yet having below him such a gradation of moral excellence as—making his own appear real and imitable—effectually fulfils his encouraging promise: “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” John xii., 32.

One sometimes hears novices fresh from the schools denying the absolute perfection of Jesus, and as good as bidding us qualify our reverence and love for him on the allegation that some day Christ may be eclipsed by a more resplendent figure. Such reveries are best answered by saying that while Christ stands high enough to save and bless the present generation, the future may be safely left, where it really is, in the hands of God, who, in Christ, as in all other great moral regenerators, has adapted his instruments to the precise work which each successive age required, and which, in his loving-kindness, he intended and provided for. “Life is earnest,” and what is needed now, as always, is not speculations about the future, but work—real, honest, hard, and persevering work—with the materials and appliances actually in hand, in order to do something so as to aid in carrying forwards God’s merciful plan for the rescue and elevation of the human race. And far more than all the dreamers on earth have done or can do may be done by the humblest servant of God, who, sensible of his dependence, yet conscious of some power, and impelled by love, goes out and endeavours to improve society after his own measure, though that measure, falling far short of “the fulness of Christ,” is in the rear of that of Socrates or Gotama, being hardly comparable with that of Zoroaster, or even Confucius.

WHAT IS MAN?

Let us pause for a moment. What have we learnt? What is the view of man to which we have been led by the highest authorities—by the Bible, by some of the luminaries and benefactors of the world, and by personal experience in ordinary and humble life? It may be summed up in a few sentences.

God is the father of men, men are the children of God. As being the children of the Heavenly Father, they possess in their nature something divine. It is God’s own spirit. It is conscience. This sovereign moral authority perfects the individual and blesses society. Conscience is not confined to the Biblical nations. It works everywhere, and in all ages. It is the sap of human life; it is the salt of the earth. In consequence of its operations our race possesses noble qualities, and a high, even an immortal, destiny. These facts are not set aside by sin. Sin is

a disease which God is engaged in healing, through the agency of Christ; and when sin, together with its consequence, moral death, is removed, evil will have been overcome of good, and God's love in Christ will prevail and rule alone. Thus God's kingdom will have fully come, because his will is fully done in all the provinces of his universal empire.

It is painful to turn away from a picture so life-like and so imposing, and from a prospect so bright, so cheering, and so attractive. But the task we have in hand compels us to cast our eye for a moment on another and very dark and painful view of man's origin, history, and fate.

The following exhibits

RENAN'S VIEW OF MAN, IN HIS OWN WORDS

"There was an epoch in which our planet possessed no germ of organic life. Then organic life began without any anterior germ, but by the internal force deposited once for all in the bosom of things. Then, at a certain moment, life appeared on the surface of our planet in virtue solely of the development of the laws of the natural order."—"De l'Origine," p. 245.

"Science demonstrates that on a certain day, in virtue of the natural laws which up to then had presided over the development of things, without exception, without external intervention, the thinking being appeared endowed with all his faculties, and perfect as to his essential elements."—"Etudes," p. 217.

"The origin and the end of life has its commencement in force and movement, and its last result in humanity."—"La Revue," p. 368.

"The consciousness of the individual has a birth and is formed; it is a result, but a result more real than the cause which produces it, much the same as the harmony of a concert would not exist without the sonorous tubes and cords of the musicians. Reason and morality are produced in the world in consequence of the existence of a certain organism; but once produced, they make their generating cause to be forgotten. Matter is the necessary condition of the production of thought; but in its turn thought triumphs over matter. A book does not consist of printed letters; it has a soul, even as a picture has a soul; and the soul is everything."—"Essais," p. 66.

"Humanity is the great problem of the age, for it is the greatest reality accessible to experience."—"Essais," p. 82.

"The model of perfection is given us by human nature."—"La Revue," p. 384.

"Humanity is the abode of some divinity, we know not what."—"La Revue," p. 391.

"The complete development of the consciousness of the universe is effected by humanity."—"Revue," p. 384.

"There is an eternal necessity for the individual thought to create the divine world after its own fashion."—"Etudes," Pref., p. viii.

"Humanity makes the divine, as the spider spins its own web."—"Job:" Intro., p. xc.

"Man makes the holiness of what he believes and the beauty of what he loves."—"Etudes," p. 423.

"Human nature, the eternal source of beauty, will ever live in that sublime name (Christ), as in all those whom humanity has consecrated, in order to remind itself of what it is, and to grow enthusiastic over its own image. Here is the living God; here is he whom we ought to adore."—"La Liberté," iii., p. 470.

"Humanity has made everything, and made everything well."—"Etudes," p. 416.

"Humanity, taken as a whole, offers an assemblage of low, selfish beings,

superior to the animal only in this, that their selfishness is more reflective."—
 "La Vie de Jésus," p. 457.

"Humanity, considered as a whole, represents a man of moderate capacity—selfish, and often ungrateful; the practical man must also be humble. Lofly aims do but mislead him. Here is the reason why great men scarcely act on the world at all except by their defeats or their littlenesses. A man who was altogether free from earthly weaknesses would be powerless, since there would not be any common measure between him and the mediocre or perverse surroundings in which he found himself astray."—"Essais," p. 72.

"There is a fatal sunderance between the simple and the cultivated portions of humanity. Provided the small number may unfold their nature freely, it will not trouble itself about the way in which the rest proportions God to its own altitude."—"Etudes:" Pref., p. xv., xvii.

"In the philosopher's eyes humanity is composed of some exceptional individuals preserved from the temptations and the blunders into which the crowd falls."—"La Revue," p. 508.

"Humanity is necessarily deceived on all questions of fact and person; often it misplaces its homage and sympathy; more often it exaggerates the parts played by individuals, and heaps on the heads of its favourites the merits of entire generations; to see the truth in all this, a refinement of mind and knowledge is requisite which does not belong to it; but it is not deceived as to the object of its worship, what it adores is really adorable; for what it adores in the characters it has idealised is the goodness and the beauty which it has placed in them."—"Etudes:" Pref., p. xxii.

"The government of things on earth belongs, in fact, to quite other forces than science and reason. The thinker considers he has very little claim to the direction of the affairs of his planet, and, satisfied with his lot, he accepts its powerlessness without regret. A spectator in the universe, he knows that the world belongs to him only as an object of study, and that the part of a reformer nearly always supposes in those who undertake it defects and qualities which he does not possess."—"Etudes:" Pref., p. xxi.

"Science would be very rash if it aspired to modify opinion. Its methods have no hold except on the few. Without seduction, and repulsive as it is, it lacks means for struggling against so many powers which have possession of it, doubtless on a better title."—"Etudes:" Pref., p. xxiv.

"If your theories are true,' it will be said, 'they must be good in application.' Yes; if humanity were worthy and capable of it. Theory is always an ideal; then will be the time to realise it, when there shall no longer be in the world rogues or fools."—"Revue," p. 510.

"In men raised to philosophic dignity, you must always distinguish personal life from the life beyond the tomb. That is what they were in reality, and this what opinion represented them to be."—"Averroes," p. 432.

"Man, after death, will not take another body similar to the first, for what has once been corrupted cannot return to life. The two bodies are but one, considered as to species; but they are two, considered as to number. Aristotle has put this correctly in the last lines 'On Generation and Corruption.' The corruptible being can never become again identical with himself; but he may return to the specific variety of which he is a part. When the air comes forth from the water and the water from the air, each of these substances returns, not to the individual whose it was, but to the species to which it belonged at first."—"Averroes," p. 158.

"While the bad man, whether a sot or an idler, will wholly die in this sense, that he will leave nothing in the general result of the labour of his race, the man who is devoted to what is good and beautiful will partake of the immortality of that which he has loved. Who now lives so much as the obscure Galilean who, eighteen centuries since, threw on the world the sword which divides us and the word which unites us? Thus the deeds of the man of genius and the good man alone escape the universal decay; for they alone count in the sum of acquired things, and their fruits go on augmenting even when they are forgotten by ungrateful humanity. Nothing is lost; what has

done the most unknown good reckons in the eternal balance more than all most insolent triumphs of error and evil. Whatever form he gives to his beliefs, whatever symbol he employs wherewith to clothe his affirmations touching the future, the just man has thus the right to say, with the ancient patriarch : ' Yes, I know it ; my avenger exists, and he will at last appear on the earth. When this skin shall have fallen into shreds, stript of my flesh, shall see God. I shall see him myself ; my eyes shall contemplate him, as those of another ; my veins within me are consumed with expectation.' ” “ Job ; ” Pref., p. xci.

“ Man is more or less man, more or less a son of God. Of God and truth you have as much as you are capable of, and as you deserve. I see no reason why a Papou* should be immortal.”—“ La Revue,” p. 378.

A story reported by Renan represents his view of what follows man's death :—

“ ‘ I was,’ says Djemal Eddin, ‘ bound to him (Joseph Ben Juda) by intimate friendship.’ One day, I said to him, ‘ If it is true that the soul survives the body, and if it retains after death a knowledge of external things, give me thy word that if thou diest before me, thou wilt come and tell me what the fact is ; and on my part, if I die before thee, I will do the same.’ We agreed. He died. For many years he came not. At last I saw him in a dream ‘ Physician,’ said I to him, ‘ did we not agree that thou wouldst come and report to me thy adventures beyond the grave?’ He turned aside his face and smiled. I seized him by the hand, and said : ‘ Thou must tell me what has befallen thee, and what takes place after death.’ He replied : ‘ The universal unites with the universe, and the particular returns to the part.’ I immediately perceived what he meant ; that is, the soul, which is the universal element, returns to the universe,—while the body, which is the particular element, returns to the terrestrial centre. Having awoke, I admired the subtlety of his reply.”—“ Averroes,” p. 181-2.

Renan has translated what he calls “ a very curious little poem,” by Feuerbach, on the subject of death. He says of it that “ never did any one sing of death in such good humour. Among other things, the poem contains what follows :

“ Frankly I do not desire to meet in the shades Socrates, Saint Augustine and so many other heroes. I had rather plunge into nothingness. Thy thought and the action of life have ended in making me weary ; let me fall asleep.

“ I go down into nothingness, and thereby another man will go up. O ye dear little children, who after us enter the world of the living, you are like flowers that grow on tombs.”

The poem terminates with these words :

“ Death for ever ! Worship death ! ”—“ La Liberté,” vi., p. 348.

The substance of our critic's view of man may be summed up in the following sentences :—Man, the product of some material force, possesses a nature in virtue of which he creates his own

* The Papous or Papousians are natives of Papua or New Guinea, a large island in Australasia, on the north-east of Australia. The inhabitants, slender in frame, but less ugly than other oceanic negroes, have temples and idols for worship, and carry on trade with the Chinese. What special reason there is for branding them as Renan does we do not know. As human beings, they have all the prerogatives of humanity.

circumstances and his own ideals, including the God whom he worships, and the individual superiorities to which he aspires. Man is the only being who possesses consciousness, for only in him does God himself become conscious. These high offices he executes in virtue of a certain divine faculty which he receives at his birth.

But here a distinction must be made. The bulk of men are low, selfish, mean, stolid, blundering, and unimprovable. The philosophic few alone reach the height of humanity, where they look on the follies and the worry of the world with serene apathy or undisguised disdain. Such a world is, of course, a riddle. A riddle now, it will ever remain a riddle, only becoming more puzzling and more perplexing as you approach the tomb, in whose unbroken darkness all human interests finally sink; though, for a time, the great thinkers and the great doers leave the print of their footsteps behind them in men's memories, which, however, are often gross exaggerations.

If this view is correct, material forces and man are the sole recognised causes. And man—what is he? In nature, perishable; in character, mean; with ideals never to be realised, he is merely a mote in the sunbeam of dreams and fancies by which he is somewhat gratified and ceaselessly mislead. Virtue, in consequence, is merely calculation, the processes of which are dazed and disturbed by the glare of tawdry illusions. The living and true God, expelled from the universe, takes with him moral excellence, solid worth of character, pure and growing happiness—in a word, all reality—leaving us to philosophers, who debate and contend without concluding anything—except that, like the classic divinities whom Cicero describes as having a *quasi sanguis* (as it were blood) they enjoy a quasi immortality “beyond the tomb.”

It would be a waste of time to answer the several falsities which the foregoing succession of extracts contains. Nor is it needful. The views presented in other parts of the chapter furnish the best answer, especially as the general principles which the quotations contain are simple assumptions, or, so far as they are more, find their confutation in what has been advanced touching the supernatural. What, however, I wish is, that the reader should distinctly place before him the two pictures—the former view of man and the latter. When he has carefully studied both, let him make his choice calmly and deliberately. A choice he must make, for to attempt to blend the two together is idle, almost equally idle the attempt to supplement the one by the other.

A few words must, however, be devoted to one point or two. There is, it appears, some divinity in man. As if to prevent or correct false impressions, the writer adds, “we know not what.” In truth, it is man's idealising faculty. It is that faculty which, like the spider, spins out of its bowels the deity whom it worships

and the heroes whom it puts on stilts. It is the source of man's illusions. Yet, as these illusions are better than man's realities, they are to be tolerated, nay, lauded and encouraged. "Better?" If illusion is man's best possession his reality must be worthless. Accordingly, worthless it is, and worse than worthless; it is low and vile in the bulk of men. Here, then, is the witness which Renan's God bears to himself. "If you are looking for the builder's monument," says the inscription in St. Paul's Cathedral, "cast your eyes around." So, reader, if you would know what kind of a divinity our philosopher places in man, study the features which he himself attributes to our race.

Yes, it is even so; the absence of God degrades man, and man degraded, degrades his Creator.

And even so is it in regard to Renan's use of religious terms. The highest are but tinsel. How imperative the duty to rub the tinsel off, lest the unwary may be stript of their religion while fancying they are nurturing it. What kind of religion is that, which, educing the sole divinity out of man, makes man in general a blockhead or a dupe, and ends by consigning him to putrefaction, decay, and dissolution?

THE HUMAN RACE ONE.

Renan's broad distinction between the philosophic few and the doltish many is, virtually, the revival on a French soil of the system of castes which has for so many centuries oppressed and desolated India. Indeed, it is the same thing under another name. The bulk are vile age after age, hopelessly and irredeemably vile. What is this but to proclaim internecine war between the opposing forces. The safety of the few can be secured only by the subjection of the many. Hence, despotism on one side and slavery on the other. Here we have paganism restored by philosophy. Here is Renan a too faithful imitator of his fellow-philosopher, Aristotle, who, in his *politics*, systematically develops the doctrine of men's inequality as a ground of inequality in their right to freedom, and of slavery as an institution in conformity with nature.

The truly scientific view of men's relations one with another, is expressed in the combined testimony of Alexander and William von Humboldt, as found at the conclusion of the former's grand and comprehensive work, entitled "*Cosmos*," vol. I.

"By maintaining the unity of the human species, we at the same time repel the cheerless assumption of superior and inferior races of men. There are families of nations more readily susceptible of culture, more highly civilised, more ennobled by mental cultivation than others, but not in themselves more noble. All are alike designed for freedom; for that freedom which in ruder conditions of society belongs to individuals only, but where states are formed, and political institutions enjoyed, belongs of right to the whole community. 'If,' in the words of Wilhelm von Humboldt, 'we would point to an idea which all history throughout its course discloses as ever establishing more

only and extending more widely its salutary empire—if there is one idea which contributes more than any other to the often contested, but still more often misunderstood, perfectibility of the whole human species—it is the idea of our common humanity, tending to remove the hostile barriers which prejudices and partial views of every kind have raised between men, and to cause all mankind, without distinction of religion, nation, or colour, to be regarded as one great fraternity, aspiring towards one common aim—the free development of their moral faculties. This is the ultimate and highest object of society; it is also the direction implanted in man's nature, leading toward the indefinite expansion of his inner being. He regards the earth and the starry heavens as outwardly his own, given to him for the exercise of his intellectual and physical activity. The child longs to pass the hills or the waters which surround his native dwelling; and his wish indulged, as the bent tree springs back to its first form of growth, he longs to return to the home which he had left; for, by a double aspiration after the unknown future and the unforgotten past, after that which he desires, and that which he has lost, man is preserved by a beautiful and touching instinct from an exclusive attachment to that which is present. Deeply rooted in man's inmost nature, as well as commanded by his highest tendencies, the full recognition of the bond of humanity, of the community of the whole human race, with the sentiments and sympathies which spring therefrom, becomes a leading principle in the history of man.' ”

We have seen human beings under various aspects. We have seen and contemplated them, not as abstractions, but realities, concrete realities. Reviewing what we have studied, we feel justified in accepting the averment of science the student has just read, and in pronouncing all these individuals and classes one. The Hebrew maiden, Ruth, and the African slave girl, Blandina, are of the same race, and each resembles the daughter we love so well in our own Saxon home. Differences do indeed present themselves in our survey either of the past or of the present hour, and it is the function of this science and that to recognise, and if possible to explain, the origin of these diversities. If, however, their origin remain in any case or in any degree obscure, their result affects not those identities of a moral kind which, with no w or doubtful voice, proclaim one great human family. Emphatically is such the declaration of Scripture. Among the merous and lofty merits of the Bible, not the least is this, that while it teaches one God, it makes that one God the Creator and Father of all men. Most conducive to peace and prosperity of the highest kind is this generic unity. Of old, its operation was interrupted by national prepossessions and corresponding national animosities. Among the early Hebrews neighbourhood was confined to the kindred of Hebrew blood. To the Greek, everyone was a barbarian who spoke a dialect differing, it might in reality be only in sound, from the dialect of Homer and Xenophon. The city, with its necessary alienation and ill-will, extended even to the natural and political divisions of so petty a land as Greece itself. The good-will of the Athenian did not extend beyond the boundaries of Attica. “Sparta for the Spartans” was practically the utmost that humanity could evoke in the land of Greece. For long ages after its foundation, Rome was the centre and the circumference of the friendly feelings of the

descendants of Romulus. All the world beyond some great central city in the East or in the West was a hostile camp, to be tolerated as little, and to be subdued as soon as possible. As a consequence of this narrow and inhuman sentiment, great monarchies were gradually formed by conquest, by which one superior tribe gained ascendancy and exercised despotism over the rest of the civilised world. Yet even these military and aggressive aggregates, while they tacitly declared the unity of man in the elements of which they were composed, did not fail to widen the recognised circle of humanity ever more and more, and thus the Babylonian Empire, the Persian, the Macedonian, the Syrian, and finally the Roman, laid open wider spaces of the earth continually, and without cessation prepared the way for the grand recognition that, from the Pillars of Hercules to Ceylon, and from Ethiopia to Sarmatia, the earth was peopled by brethren. The fact thus established by war and commerce, and which had been for long centuries taught, not in the Portico nor the Academy, nor in the Zend Avesta or the Vedas, but in the sacred books of a small, misunderstood, and despised race on the banks of the Jordan, was at length proclaimed by a Jewish carpenter to the world in tones so incisive and thrilling as to pass from land to land and from age to age, until now, at the end of nearly two thousand years, it has become one of the most valued heirlooms of human kind, and one of the indubitable data of science. Never, indeed, would a voice have been raised against a conclusion which ensues from the widest and deepest deductions had not the unity been misconceived and misplaced. Wherein does it consist?

SOCIETY AND RELIGION MAKE THE HUMAN RACE ONE.

Man loves his kind so as to give rise to home, and therein to religion; and from home and religion spring duty, citizenship, and civilisation. All men are one in worship, in the hearth, in some civic union or other, and in the moral, intellectual, and social advantages which hence ensue. By no means are those advantages the same in degree. But, varying as they do from almost the smallest up to the most complex and grand, they are one in kind, whether as seen in a Bedouin tent, in a nest of wigwags, or in the splendid capitals of Paris and London. Going back from the fruits to the stem whence they grow, we find social religion the source of all—whether it be the agreements or the differences. The first pair committed the first sin, and the first sin opened the eye, smote the heart, and bent the knee as of a man and a woman, so virtually of the human race. This universal fact, which adds another and a dark feature to the common likeness, is the ground and the reason of God's Providence, whether as general in the world at large or special among the sons of Israel; but whether general or special, as

as the sin and the consequent disorder, and made special not arbitrarily, but educationally, in order that God's impartial love might rise and shine over the earth as fast and as fully as man's capacity for divine truth folded and matured. The seed was sown with the blessing of himself that God bore to man, whether at the foot of the Himalayas, on the uplands of Mesopotamia, the lowlands of Canaan; and every succeeding year has an harvest, which has increased and increased, until now, the harvest of the earth is ripe." The great result, and the long sight, have been accelerated by Christ more than by agencies combined, if only because "the Son of Man" God as Father, and named and treated men as brethren. In his religion, it is not less pre-eminently humanitarian. When priests came, and is passing away; the age of nobles only to decline; the age of kings ensued, and is now passing into dust; but the age of man, which is the age of progress, opened, and will never close.

MAN A PROGRESSIVE BEING.

For eulogy can be pronounced on the past. What a contrast between the petty freebooters that infested the borders of the Red Sea in the days of Abraham, and the sublime and noble states which have London, Paris, Berlin, and Washington as their respective centres. And though many and many pages of The Book of the World are stained with blood, and disfigured with violence, and disfigured with tyranny; though, the perfect type of our race has never been attained except in "the Son of Man," yet by the side of these blurs and blotches are the noble, the beautiful, the grand physiognomies, which attest the capabilities of man, and foretell a future which shall throw the present into total eclipse; while, underneath these highlands of crime or superlative virtues, there lives the ordinary human race, in homes of all kinds, from the least and the meanest to the greatest and the grandest; and there in the world may see the essential features of manhood—with what does your mind? Those simple, natural, unadorned, and the features gladden the heart, and give an assurance that the happiness of human society exist on a scale of dimensions as to defy all our known measures and to make us blush at its insufficiency.

SUPREMACY OF RELIGION.

Man being thus seen to be one in essence, religion is the same and the sceptre. In other words, it is their strength and glory. This is the testimony of the Bible. This is the history of the world. This is the assertion of every man's experience. With exceptions too few to be regarded

as anything else than anomalies, the whole of our race proclaim with one voice that the worship and service of God are at once a solemn duty, an imperious necessity, a pure delight, a mighty strength, and a glorious hope. The avowment is sustained by liberalities the most profuse and sacrifices the most costly—liberalities and sacrifices so profuse and costly in all ages, and under every form of religion, as to need the severe restraint of reason, and even the restrictions and curtailments of the law. In this vast and varied agglomeration of patent facts, God bears witness to himself by signs and tokens too numerous to be gainsaid, and too impressive to be withstood. Religion, in consequence, is as necessary and inevitable as light and air and food; nay, even these and every other human good have been forfeited for its sake. A necessity, which is thus man's master passion, can never be eradicated. So long as man is man he will continue to worship. Nor can he cease to worship unless he has first unmanned himself. He who denies God, he who trifles with religion, he who dogmatizes on topics before which other men bend the knee of their inmost heart, cuts himself off from his species, and has isolation for the reward of his universal scepticism.

In attestation of these remarks, I cite the words of one who devoted his best days to the study of religion, especially in its historical relations:—

“Man need only listen to himself, need only listen to the voice of nature, which speaks to him in a thousand tones, to be irresistibly drawn over to religion. Barbarous hordes, savage tribes, nations which are in the strength of the social condition, those which languish in the decrepitude of civilisation, all experience the power of the indestructible sentiment of religion. That sentiment triumphs over all interests. The savage, to whom fishing or hunting furnishes only an insufficient meal, consecrates to his *fetiché* a portion of his precarious food. Two conflicting tribes lay down their arms to unite at the foot of a common altar. Free nations interrupt their deliberations to invoke the gods in their temples. Despots concede to their slaves some hours of release for the purposes of worship. Thus interests and passions submit to religion. When suppliants embrace the knees of the sacred statues, hatred is calmed, and vengeance becomes mild. Under his religious sentiment, man imposes silence on his most imperious inclinations. Pleasure he denies himself, love he abjures; he even hurries to suffering and death. At the same time, this sentiment associates itself with all our wants and all our desires. We ask of the gods all that we do not sacrifice to them. The citizen invokes them in behalf of his country; the lover confides to them the object of his attachment. The prayer of the prisoner pierces the walls of his dungeon, and the tyrant trembles on his throne, dreading retribution from invisible power. Shall we oppose to these examples a wretched horde or two described as wandering at the extremities of the earth destitute of religious ideas? The existence of such depends on the doubtful testimony of some travellers, who were probably inexact; for assuredly writers may be suspected of inexactitude, some of whom have on hearsay accused of atheism tribes whom they did not visit, and others of whom, not recognising religion where it really was, inferred from the absence of this form of it and the other that the substance did not exist. However this may be, would the exception be an important one which might be furnished by hordes living on human flesh, and whose condition

bled that of the brutes? We may, then, consider the sentiment of man as universal. This sentiment, not possessed by other earthly beings, which appears in whatever condition man is found, is the fundamental law of nature."—"De la Religion Considérée dans sa Source, ses Formes, et ses Développements," Paris, 1839. 1, 2 seq.

RELIGION THE HUMAN CENTRE AND SOURCE OF RELIGION.

Religion has a stronghold. It is called conscience. In other words, the spiritual order of realities has its source in the moral order. Conscience is the root of all true religion. Hence, wherever you find sound morality, you find religion and you find God.

If so, no sound morality, no God, and no religion. Accordingly, the hypocrite is irreligious. Irreligious, too, is every religion that lacks simplicity of motive, aim, conduct. To say one thing and mean another, to employ words in unusual senses, or a religion opposite to, or different from, that in which you know they are taken by most men, is irreligious. As the disregard and abuse of conscience is thus very serious, so very elevating is its fidelity to conscience. This is the one true fidelity, and its opposite is the one true infidelity. The former saves, the latter ruins.

To the former we owe our real benefactors, the latter can give nothing higher than a speculatist.

"When faith departs, when honour flies,
The man is dead."

Who who reveres conscience cannot defy God, or be destitute of religion. Hence, patriotism is a religious virtue, a religiously elevated character, if only because it often demands the entire sacrifice of self. Yet, though so pure and lofty a virtue, it is by no means rare.

There is no really free country on the face of the earth that has purchased its liberty at the cost of rivers of noble and truly precious blood. This fact alone should suffice to vindicate mankind against detractors, who are blind to the value of religion as commonly understood.

Religion, conscience, man, however are set at naught, in the wrong hideous description of human society:—

Nothing is pure which comes from man; by the side of its beauty every religion has its original stain. Who, in his own moral sentiments, can determine one which divides what is amiable from what is hateful, ugliness from beauty, and, in a measure, joy from grief? Religions being the most complete products of human nature share in its contradictions, and preclude simple and definite judgments. Firmly to apply to those capricious phenomena scholastic theories, tracing a line between wisdom and folly is to misconceive nature. Every thing passes as in mirage, in those Walpurgis nights, in that great path of all the passions and all the instincts. The saint and the sinner, the charming and what is horrible, the apostle and the juggler, heaven and hell join hand in hand, as the visions of a troubled sleep, in which all the secrets hidden in the folds of fancy appear one after the other."—"Etudes," 67-8.

His painful caricature indicates its source, and utters a caution.

Can anything be more alien to the spirit of the Bible which is summed up in these prophetic words—words which are pre-eminently now receiving fulfilment and illustration :—"I will make a man more precious than gold, even a son of man more than the golden wedge of Ophir."—Isaiah xlii. 12.

A similarly beautiful picture, which is reflected in living and harmonious forms from the pages of the New Testament, is implicitly disowned, disavowed, and as good as treated as a decision by our critic. Why? A world without God, man without a father, society without a governor, may well be described as a revel of gross deceits and foul disorder. Look around you, reader; from the great world of history bring your eye to your own city, village, neighbourhood, home. You see much to deplore; and what you see that is unsound, you long, I trust, to heal; but you, also, see much that is pure, honest, just, lovely, honourable, and even something that is morally fine and noble. While, in general, the domestic and social elements under your notice "work together for good" on a scale of no inconsiderable proportions, and to issues at once pleasing and promising. In consequence, while you rejoice in the present, you trust in the future. Your reason for that trust is your faith in man, which faith has its roots in your faith in God. Renounce the latter, you forfeit the former, and are thrown back into that "blackness of darkness" which rises, and ever must rise, and spread over the horizon from an atheistic view of man and society.

"Give me a kiss, darling," said I to my grandchild, a curly-headed, bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked, frolicsome boy, three years of age. As an answer he ran out of the room chuckling with delight. Busy over my books, I did not pursue the runaway.

About ten minutes afterwards he returned with a sad countenance, and a tear bursting from his eye. "I have come to kiss you, grandpa," he said, "and here is something for you," holding out a small packet of sweetmeats.

Surprised and gratified at this simply beautiful instance of sorrow for having, as he fancied, given me pain, and suspecting the child had been put upon making this peace offering, I sought information. The answer I received satisfied me that the act was wholly spontaneous.

This simple act is an epitome of man, conscience, religion. It contains the essence of our common nature. Out of the mouth of babes does God educe a testimony so as to put his assailants to silence (Ps. viii. 2; Matt. xxi. 16). If Renan be not yet learnt that the nursery teaches a deeper wisdom than the schools, he has not got beyond the alphabet of true knowledge.

The incident has an appendix. The next day when he came to kiss me I offered to give him back the present. "No," he said, "I had rather not take it, it is yours." Yes, his tender heart felt he must atone for what he had done by absolutely parting with something that he liked.

Here is a key to the origin of sacrifices. Men cannot be at peace when they have sinned, unless at a certain cost, that price they must pay, and that price they pay, not vicariously, but out of their own resources. They part with something valuable, dear, precious ; and that they may part with it wholly and for ever, it is consumed in the fire, and so, returning into the elements, goes back to its giver, God—in order to placate him, said the old, gross, false theory ; the natural feeling is, in order to fulfil my duty by punishing myself, while I express my contrition and my gratitude to my Maker.

ANTICIPATIONS.*

We have surveyed the past under the guidance of the Bible and of Renan. The former, as well as the latter, takes a view of the future. Our philosopher's view has no higher ideal than at the best common place for the multitude on earth and posthumous fame for the select few in what arises to them when, resolved into their constituents elements, they

—“ be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown in restless violence round about
The pendent world.”

How different the Christian's outlook on the future, even when regarded apart from the eternal world ! Even here “all things work together for good” to him. In consequence things to come, say to-morrow, say next year, say for himself, say for his offspring, can bring no harm to him or them, so long as they are “followers of that which is good.” Doubtless, like other mortals, he in this world has tribulation ; but “his tribulation worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope ; and his hope maketh not ashamed (by disappointment), because the love of God is shed abroad in his heart (John xvi., 33) through faith in Him that overcame the world” (Rom. v., 4) ; and, in consequence, all his experiences become so many summits, on which he successively plants his unwearied foot, and whence he lifts his aspiring eye, “reckoning,” with Paul, that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” (Rom. viii., 18.) Here, again, the Biblical view is so transcendently sublime, elevating, and attractive, as to throw even theistical anticipations into the shade, how much more so the flimsy materialisms of Renan !

By no means do I deny that shadows overhang society as well as individual life. It is a veiled universe in which we dwell. There is a veil on the face of the skies which, till within the last two or three centuries, hid the mechanism and dimmed the glory of the heavens to man from the creation of the world. There is a veil on the surface of the earth, which concealed from the sharpest and most earnest gaze the structure of the earth's crust, and kept from man's use the vast mineral treasures of its depths.

There is a veil on ancient times which makes the origin of nations a dark enigma, and their early history a tissue of misconceived facts, exaggerated incidents, and palpable legends. There is a veil on the human mind which, darkening and disturbing our consciousness, renders a full and accurate knowledge of self a very difficult problem. There is a veil on the human heart which, woven of undue personal regard, local preferences, national prejudices and antipathies of all kinds, keeps men and peoples at a distance one from another, and causes animosity, war and bloodshed. The world in which we live has its night as well as its day, and in some parts of its history the night usurps the larger dominion.

A fact of so wide an operation assumes the character of a law, and such a law, in the workings of God's Providence, is not without a reason, for He who doeth nothing in vain must have intended a wise and good result in appointing or permitting the clouds which overhang this lower world. Nor is it difficult to catch a glimpse of the benign tendency of the obscure and shadowy light in which man lives, since it is to the concealment of God in the universe that we owe that discipline of mind and character, which, in union with God's disclosures of himself, have proved the chief and the very abundant source of human enterprise and human achievement. Nevertheless, here also we see but in part, for there is a veil on Providence which, if often thin and occasionally almost transparent, is at times thick and distressing. Individuals may be blame-worthy—may sometimes be guilty in exaggerating their own trials; but, after every proper allowance for this common fault, we must admit that, in regard to all objects of faith, there are clouds of darkness which we are too weak to look through, much less to remove. Yet these clouds rise on our fairest prospects, they darken and trouble our dearest hopes, and so unnerve our minds, and hand us over almost powerless to the day of temptation, disease, or death. From objects of faith, then, let us for a few moments turn to objects of sight. The universe in which we live is one; one God rules the outer and the inner world, and if our sight is too dim to see him face to face in his sanctuary, we may probably find him and hear his voice as He walks abroad in the garden of his visible creation. The thought which I would develop is this, that as in science the knowledge and the power already gained are small when contrasted with what we may anticipate, so in religion our present attainments are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us.

I begin by declaring that in science I anticipate great disclosures. What those disclosures will be I am not so visionary as to attempt to define, nor so philosophical as to be able to conjecture. I declare the fact that great disclosures will be made. I avow my belief that coming disclosures will throw our present knowledge

into the shade. I discern intimations of a great unveiling. Nature seems to me to be drawing aside the thicker drapery with which, like an eastern maiden, she has hidden her person. Our present light is only the grey dawn of day, but faint flashes break up from the horizon, and rays of great brilliancy shoot up to the zenith, which herald the coming of a new and brighter monarch to govern and bless the earth. Many agencies appear to me to be in active operation, which promise to enlarge the circle of our vision, and so to augment our dominion over nature. How many sciences are imperfect, in such a manner as to give assurance that the power which brought them to their actual state of development, will not fail to carry them forwards to perfection ! Windows have been made in the vault of heaven, and for one gazer of old there are now thousands, who are prying into the inner glories of God's high temple. Eyes have been invented which are so piercing that they see down to the bottom of the abyss, and penetrate into the inmost structure of all living and dead things. Skill has been gained which commands the most ethereal essences to do its bidding and perform its task, and compels them ever and anon to stop and be patient under the minutest scrutiny. Instruments have been constructed which contract space and defy time, which survey a globe whose distance baffles calculation, and analyse an animal whose minuteness evades our sight. We already ride for the most part triumphantly over the ocean ; we unite distant continents and level or perforate impeding mountains. If one power of nature is adverse to our wishes, we compel another power to overcome the opposition. What the land refuses we make the ocean yield. If this science falls short of our wants or our expectations, we get them satisfied from the resources of another. Where will all this stop ? Why should it stop at all ? The universe is all but infinite, and all but infinite is the human mind. The power that has achieved so much, thereby proclaims itself able to achieve still more. The discoveries that have been made look only like first views, mere beginnings. They are so many premonitions that awaken corresponding anticipations. They are calls and promises rather than fulfilments. They are but dawnings. They are just such openings into God's inner world as in my boyhood I sometimes fancied the stars of dark night were, asking and wooing the eye to strain into the bright and happy mansions of heaven.

In indulging such anticipations I find a sanction in the conduct of great men that have gone before. There are few discoveries that were not clearly or dimly anticipated ere they were made. The mind must first frame the image before it gets to the reality. Our active powers make their acquisitions in virtue of the thoughts by which they are put in motion. Centuries before its discovery vague notions of the rotundity of the earth were flitting through men's minds and impressing their images on men's words.

Columbus discovered the new world because he had convinced himself of its existence, and long anterior to the age of Columbus a Roman poet predicted that a day would come when another continent would to human sight emerge from the dark bosom of the ocean. All great discoverers have been men of faith. They were each endowed with a prophetic soul. The eye of their mind saw first what afterwards stood clear before their bodily vision. Galileo saw the satellites of Jupiter with the eye of faith before he saw them with the eye of sense. Largely partaking of the divine nature, the greatest of those seers have seen the whole creation in its completeness before the several stages thereof began to come into light, and while the successive processes went forwards in gradual accomplishment of God's original idea.

This faculty of anticipation belongs to the least imaginative of our original discoverers. The distinguishing characteristic of the mind of him who wrote "Poor Richard's Almanack" was surely common sense. Yet Franklin first conjectured and then proved that electricity and lightning were identical. And this, the most practical of all great men of science, thus wrote to Priestley, whose history also illustrates my doctrine:—

"The rapid progress which true science now makes occasions my regretting that I was born so soon. It is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the power of man over nature. We may perhaps learn to deprive masses of their gravity and give them absolute levity for the sake of easy transport. Agriculture may diminish its labour and double its produce. All diseases may by some means be prevented or cured, not excepting even that of old age, and our lives be lengthened at pleasure, even beyond the antediluvian standard."

Without taking the passage to the letter I may say that, could Franklin now visit the earth, he would find that not in a thousand years but in a century something like what he had ventured to conjecture had been exhibited in the domain of every day reality. "The power of man over nature!" why, a child can now set in operation a machine which spins threads as delicate as those of the silkworm, and raises an anchor as easily as we can lift a pin, and very little skill is required to enable persons hundreds of miles apart to converse one with another almost as rapidly and well as if they stood in each other's presence. And the very man to whom Franklin spoke of the possibility that a thousand years afterwards bodies would be deprived of their gravity, was even then successfully cultivating a science which, with perfect ease and unerring certainty, converts solids into liquids and liquids into aeriform bodies, and at its pleasure brings back the same elements into a liquid, or into a solid form.

I have spoken of persons separated by space speaking to one another, as if face to face. The same power may be illustrated in regard to men and nations sundered by time. To revive the past, to make those dead bones become instinct with life, to cause them to take a visible form and utter an audible voice, seems a

first sight not a miracle, because it is an impossibility. Yet what else has that enterprising traveller done who not very long since smote with the wand of science the mounds which covered the dark lands of the ancient Nineveh? And what but a resurrection has been brought about throughout the once sleeping valley of the Nile? In language no problem had come to be accounted more thoroughly hopeless than the interpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Yet the problem has been solved, and now it is discovered that the elements for its solution were in the hands of all the learned for ages, only the eye to recognise and the skill to employ them were lacking. And at the present moment how many a linguist is prying with characteristic intensity into the written remains which have thrown a new light over all remote oriental history! Nay, the very dust of the earth in many parts seems with discoveries. The land of Egypt has yielded to the enterprise of the last century the most ample and the most astonishing rewards, but its soil, always prolific, bears in its bosom unknown treasures. Thus writes an accomplished visitor of that still mysterious country:—

“If I were to have the choice of a fairy gift, it should be like none of the many things I fixed upon in my childhood; it should be a great winnowing fan such as, without injury to human eyes and lungs, would blow away the sand which buries the monuments of Egypt. What a scene would be laid open then. One statue brought from Memphis was buried a hundred feet below the present surface. Who knows but that the greater part of old Memphis and of other glorious cities lies almost unharmed under the sand! Who can say what armies of sphinxes, what sentinels of colossi, might start up on the banks of the river, or come forth from the hill sides of the interior, when the cloud of sand had been wafted away! What quays along the Nile and the banks of forgotten canals! What terraces, what architectural stages might we not find for a thousand miles along the river where now the orange sands lie so smooth and light as to show the track—the clear footprint—of every beetle that comes out to bask in the sun! It is however best as it is. The sand is a fine means of preservation. The minds of scholars are preparing for an intelligent interpretation of what a future age may find, and science, chemical and mechanical, will probably supply means for removing the sand when its conservative office has lasted long enough.”—Harriet Martineau’s “Eastern Life.”

Enough to show that my anticipations are not altogether groundless. Enough also as an answer to those who receive every great enterprise of benevolence with the cry of “impossible.” Impossible? Nothing is impossible which God loves, approves, and wills. Nothing therefore that is good, wise, and true is impossible. Nothing is impossible which, having its origin in the better emotions of man’s heart and the wise suggestions of his intellect, can command the sympathies of the good and great, and like a noble ship, fraught with the rich products of distant lands, is borne into the desired haven of success by the conspiring breezes of popular sympathies and general enthusiasm. Impossible? Yes, all things, the easiest, are impossible to the untrue, the doubting; but to faith, love, and energy no good thing is denied.

We make our own impossibilities, and then charge them on nature, man, and God. Happy for the world that there have been men whose faith in their own power was boundless. "Impossible," said Napoleon, is not a French word. A moral impossibility the Christian should never acknowledge. Socrates did not find it impossible to change a selfish, sour, and irascible nature into one of large benevolence, great sweetness, and imperturbable self control. So Paul declared "I can do all things through Christ who giveth me strength." Impossible? Doubtless the worldly wise men of the days of Jubal declared his humble efforts to construct "the harp and the organ" impossible, yet his best instrument was a mere bundle of reeds compared with the least elaborate instruments of the present hour. Imagine a spirit soaring from age to age above our globe and intent on what successively takes place. How often has he heard the word impossible, and straightway seen the impossible become the actual. All inventors are first termed visionaries, then humbled down as foes to existing interests, to be at last hailed as benefactors and philanthropists. Impossible! why without any stretch of memory I can remember when it was learnedly proved (in the Manchester Mechanics' Institution) that a steam voyage across the Atlantic was an impossibility. Impossible, indeed, all great things are to those who use the cry, but to me it is a recommendation of an enterprise when some men pronounce it impossible. I might even have some misgiving as to the worth and the practicability of a general education and of universal peace, did not those glorious anticipations excite hostility on the part of persons who are wont to withstand every social advance.

It may, however, be doubted whether past experience warrants equally confident and cheering anticipations in regard to moral progress. There are many who, holding that there is nothing new under the sun, hold also that human nature ever remains the same, and that in a fair general balance the good and the evil vary in their relative proportions very little from age to age. Such an opinion is contradicted by the voice of history. Take two remote periods, compare them together, and you become sensible of a great contrast. The political corruption, the moral deadness, the scornful unbelief, the personal depravity, the dissoluteness of morals in all classes of society, the bloodthirstiness, the domestic unchastity, and the unnatural lusts which characterized the external refinements of Roman life in the days of Augustus, have no counterpart in any class, in any body of men, in any individuals in our own times. Great evils do prevail, sore diseases demand potent remedies, but England in its morals stands superior not only to Rome in her Augustan age, or France in the age of her glory under Louis XIV., but to herself; for, in morals and manners, as well as in science and wealth, this country holds a position in advance of any before reached, whether by herself or any other nation.

oral achievements, I know, are difficult, very difficult. The
 and gained is ever lost, the ground lost has ever to be again

Religious excellence, as a purely and essentially individual
 er, has to be wrought out by each individual in succession, by
 for himself. The work has to be done over and over again
 lessly. Transmitted virtue, like imputed righteousness, is
 nmeaning phrase. Yet, though every successive individual
 become wise, good, and great by his own exertions ; never-
 ss the task may be, and is, undertaken and accomplished
 r improved circumstances, and with growing impulse. It is
 r for a peasant now to own, love, and serve one God, the
 er of all worlds, than it was for Socrates or Plato of old.
 e sages did not, and could not, rise to the grand conception
 e great human brotherhood, which must now occupy, fill,
 move the heart of every sincere disciple of Jesus, however
 r his position. Surely patience under suffering has been
 ered less difficult, since Jesus endured mocking, outrage, and
 1 with the gentle spirit of a lamb ! Surely his example makes
 work of blessing little children with the high and lasting
 ings of a good education, a work as delightful as it is
 rative !

ere is finally one great aid to our moral endeavours, which
 ntinually increasing, and to which I can set no limits. It is
 power of sympathy, the power which comes from a union in
 same work of many minds and many hearts. This power of
 athy is very great even between individuals. Ask the son
 lives remote from a beloved mother, whether the sympathies
 h unite their hearts are not as powerful, whether for impulse
 estraint, as they are grateful and permanent ? What power
 sympathy exert in homes, in the many little circles formed
 r professions, our trades, our churches ? How strong a thing
 tional hate, and national hate has its support in national
 athies, which, being narrow, excessive, and false, beget corre-
 ding antipathies. But men's minds are beginning to go
 nd their usual boundaries. At least, people are daily acquiring
 athies as wide as they are intense. Englishmen, without
 ng to love their homes and their country, are learning to love
 kind. A grand European mind is forming even in the
 m of our artisans, and thousands are those whose heart has
 n so wide and so Christian as to take in the whole world.
 ate we have had topics of universal interest, claims on our
 mon humanity, appeals to all our higher impulses and our
 est sensibilities, till we begin to practically feel our alliance
 intimate connexion with all great men and all good men,
 all human benefactors, and all true patriots, and all oppressed
 les, and all disqualified races, and all injured classes, and all
 acuted and maltreated individuals, in all sects, in all countries,
 tropic to tropic, and from pole to pole. And this common

feeling, with its common objects, its common strivings, its common defeats, and its common triumphs, begets glowing sympathies in our hearts, and divine charities, till virtue and beneficence acquire the power first of enthusiasm and then of inspiration. Pre-eminently is this the day for great sympathies, great in comparison with our former littleness, but weak in relation to the power which they themselves will put forth and wield. Of old sympathy among the Hellenic races assembled an army that levelled the walls of Troy. In the middle ages sympathy marshalled the Christian nations of Europe in a crusade against the crescent. But never till now have there been seen those world-wide sympathies which are undoing the bonds of the slave, securing universal education, demanding universal peace, enlarging patriotism into philanthropy, and forming, in all human churches, the one glorious church of Christ. Tell me not that I am visionary if, from the force of such sympathies, I anticipate a new era of moral excellence, Christian power, and Christian blessedness. No! the attainments of the present are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed, if not in and to us, yet and to our offspring and our successors.

We must not conclude our *anticipations* without citing an anecdote regarding one who confessedly holds a very high position and who, perhaps, of all men, had more of that forecast which is an essential element in the true philosopher. Sir Isaac Newton is reported to have used these words :—

"I know not what the world will think of my labours, but to myself seems that I have been but as a child playing on the sea shore ; now finding some pebble rather more polished, and now some shell rather more agreeably variegated than another, while the immense ocean of truth extended its unexplored before me."

The all but boundless capacity of Newton would have shrunk from the temerity of the man who laughs the miracles of Jesus to scorn, and denies even their possibility. Newton's monument bears these words :—

"Sibi gratulentur mortales tale tantumque extitisse humani generis decus," that is,

"Let mortals congratulate themselves that so great an ornament of the human race has existed."

"Impossible!" exclaims our critic, "at least moral perfection is a dream." Dark is the mind in which such a theory could be elaborated, and dark must be the hue of its moral judgment. When Renan has learnt to think better of his fellow men he will regret the shadows he has thrown over the pure and serene character of Jesus.

This chapter has been dedicated to the study of man. The object we have had in view, in the rapid sketches we have been able to give, has been to confute Renan's errors on the point of the effect of a broad contrast, for scepticism as to man inevitably

leads to scepticism as to God, Christ, and immortality. This aim is, however, but subsidiary to the wider and higher purpose of aiding others on the road to religious truth. Before all have we desired to lay a solid foundation on which to build a reliable and satisfactory faith in God—the source as of the universal life, so also of the life of every individual. That foundation consists of what man is in himself and what he is in God. In other words, the true man, the highest style of man, the Christian man is God's own handywork. Every one of his virtues is a divine product, as it is the realisation of a divine idea, the imprint of a divine original, a reflection of a divine excellence; and the whole man, with all his qualities blended and harmonised into one purely human and genuinely divine result, is an embodiment of God's will and an accomplishment of God's purpose in the individual, and, as such, so much done and perfected toward the complete elevation of the race into the image, likeness, and blessedness of God. In view of what God has done in and by man, history is only the theatre of God's action on the intelligence of our planet, and the future state only the full expansion of the flowers and the full ripening of the fruits of time. Consequently, here and hereafter are not two worlds, but the one continued area of God's workings for human good. It also follows that history is simply the unrolling of the Divine plan, the evolution of the Divine will, the continuous and ever-brightening manifestation of the Divine love. Consequently, as history shows forth God, so God reveals himself in history; and as God reveals himself in history, so does He reveal himself in every particle of light, and every crumb of good—in a word, in every pure motive, in every righteous endeavour, in every conscientious striving, and specially in every noble soul, and every heroic self-sacrifice which illumine the past or dignify the present. Thus the study of man leads to a knowledge of God—a knowledge which is based on the granite rock of the personal experience of every pure-minded, large-hearted, Christ-loving, and God-serving individual. This, however, is the theme of the next chapter.

Before entering on it the student will do well to pause and ask himself what, on mature consideration, he has reason to expect. If, as we have seen, it is a veiled universe in which we live, clearly we see only in part, we know only in part. Beyond the veil lies the infinite, of which all seen things are but the shadowy manifestations. The substance of things escapes from our human grasp. Only as the veil is lifted can our eyes penetrate within. It is clear, then, that MAN IS NOT THE MEASURE OF THE UNIVERSE, and if not of the universe, certainly not of God, its creator and sustainer. Both are too high, too deep, too vast for our apprehension—how much more so for our comprehension. What else, then, but the absolutely impossible do we attempt when we not only criticise God, but, assuming the infallibility of our criticism, set up to be gods ourselves.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOD OF REVELATION AND THE GOD OF IDEALISTIC MATERIALISM.

I. THE GOD OF REVELATION.



ONE of the most solemn scenes in all history is connected with a revelation of himself made by God to Moses when a refugee and a wanderer. Led by the hand of divine Providence into the depths of the Sinaitic Peninsula, he comes to Mount Horeb, the ancient worshipping place of his own people, and probably the primæval altar of the Shemitic race. Arrived there, he beholds a bush that burnt, but was unconsumed. It was the visible emblem of a great religious transition, the service rendered by which being necessitated by the beholder's spiritual condition. Brought up in the idolatries of Egypt, he had slowly learnt to lay aside those gross and cumbrous symbols, and to see and own God as the central verity of them each and all. And yet, accustomed to visible portrayals of God, he could not at once rise to a purely spiritual conception. Not unlike other great religious reformers, he had stopped midway in his ascent. Of all emblems fire is the least impure image of the Creator, for it not only consumes all impurity, but warms, quickens, and fosters. Specially is it suitable as denoting God, inasmuch as it manifestly denotes the sun, the great visible source of light, heat, and life to this lower world. Arrived at this stage of religious development, Moses began to feel purer and loftier thoughts moving in his mind. In this state he sees that burning bush. The bush burns, but is not reduced to ashes. How is this? Here is something contrary to experience. The spectator is soon wrapt in deep and solemn meditation as to "why the bush is not burnt." Thus drawing nigh to God, God drew nigh to him, saying : "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Then filled with awe and wonder, Moses hears the revealing word : "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Hearing this declaration, "Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." However, the desired change was completed. Moses renounced the fire-worship to which he had risen in Egypt out of the mire of idolatry, and was prepared to become a missionary for Jehovah, the covenant God of Israel. The means of his conversion is figured in that burning but unconsumed bush, out of which God spake, as the superior power over fire, which henceforth Moses could regard only as God's minister and agent (Exodus iii).

The bush, however, was but the external sign and symbol of a higher religious conception than that to which Moses had previously attained. More important, at least to us, is the state of mind which made the elevation that ensued possible. Already on the road out of darkness into light, and with all his faculties bent in search of divine truth, he was vividly impressible in heart, and specially was he open to the sentiment of awe and reverence. That sentiment, already deep and intense, receives emphasis and impulse from the voice of God within his spirit. Overpowered, he sinks on the ground, and there in wrapt and pious meditation receives from God himself a truth of the loftiest import. Technically expressed, that truth was that God, higher than the highest of all that Moses owned and revered, was the covenant God of Israel, and as such concerned for the welfare of Moses' brethren, toiling and perishing under the crushing burdens of Egyptian despotism. The disclosure revived dim but venerable impressions he had received in his earliest days from his mother's lips, and which occasional communion with Hebrew worthies had prevented from wholly vanishing from his mind. Thus carried back to his native land and his devout ancestors, he felt linked with them, not only by ties of blood, but also the deeper and more intimate bonds of sameness of country and oneness of religion. While revolving these thoughts day after day, it may be for even months or years, he became impregnated with the prolific thought of the continuity of Divine Providence, and the gradual ascent of the human soul to higher and purer forms of truth. The effect of the whole, which may not be inappropriately termed *The Conversion of Moses*, was to fill his mind with light no less acceptable than new, and to call forth in his heart the heroic courage which ended by making him the deliverer of his people, and the originator of the Hebrew Commonwealth.

GOD, WHO IS SPIRIT, REVEALS HIMSELF IN THE SPIRIT OF MAN.

The narrative has been written down because it contains an important lesson for us. We are about to study the most sacred of all subjects. Let us put off our shoes from off our feet, for the place whereon we stand is holy ground. The bare intellect can "never by searching find out God." God ever escapes from the narrow and complicated forms of the dialectician. The imagination rises on too uncertain a pinion to lay hold of God with a firm grasp. Credal religion has neither life nor movement wherewith to apprehend God. It is only the awe-pervaded heart, the inspired conscience, the patriotic and domestic associations—all that we mean by love and reverence, that enters into communion with God, so as to see his face and hear his voice, and be bowed down in overpowering devotion under his felt and beatific presence.

And here we are clearly taught what order of realities we must

put ourselves into if we are to succeed in our intended search after God. It is the moral and spiritual order. I add the epithet spiritual, simply to guard against the possible misapprehension that by moral I mean ethical, or that side of our common nature which derives its conclusions from human customs, usages, laws, of earthly origin and sanction. So superficial a thing, which perhaps has no reality but in books and schools; for religion has ever been the principal focus of moral light and impulse to the world; so superficial a thing, being thin and shadowy in itself, can communicate very little toward the solution of our problem. If God is to be known to man he will be revealed in that part of our nature which most resembles, and least unfitly reflects, God. God, who is spirit, can, indeed, be apprehended only by those who are spiritual. Our spirit is the sense by which God is seen, no less than the eye is for vision, the ear for hearing, the palate for taste, and the lips for speech. The spirit lives, breathes, and becomes strong only in the way of obedience to its source and sustainer. Duty is the way to God, and the link of our union with God. Duty; not morality, but duty—the payment to God of that which we owe to him in virtue of our origin from, and our ceaseless dependence on him. Now, duty is in essence ancestral. Moses was taken back to his own country and his own kinsmen ere he was able to take an upward step in the religious life. We are thus taught that religion is a nursling of home. Led naturally, gradually, and gently to obey father and mother, we are in due course led to own our moral obligations, and feel and recognise our duty to their God and our God, to their Father and our Father. This is the first spot where man's spirit communes with God. It is holy ground; in that sacred and prolific soil germinate the elements out of which sprang our prophets, our saints, our martyrs, and, in a word, all that is highest and best in our race.

We have said a word or two bearing on what we may term the natural history of religion. The family hearth is the focus of man's religious life. I do not mean that it is its only source, for all man's surroundings, whether on earth, in air, in the skies, in the deep, all contribute something as to the expansion of his powers, so to the calling forth and fostering of his idea of and faith in God.

Now a state of mind thus originated, fed, strengthened, and elevated needs no defence or justification. As natural, it is proper; nay, it is inevitable. Scepticism is not born in the nursery. Worship with a child is unavoidable, even as wonder and admiration fill and exercise its soul. As well might I be required to justify its sense of dependence on its nurse as to justify a child's sense of dependence on God. And in that sense of dependence is the germ of all religion. Even obedience would never arise but from the felt, though unexpressed, consciousness of dependence.

Home affections and duties are universal. Universal then is the soil whereon specially the idea of God unfolds itself, and, acquiring strength and vigour, puts forth leaves, blossoms, fruit, all, in their kind and degree, beautiful. Hence the idea of God is universal. The idea is universal, in fact. No nation, tribe, or clan without the idea. Vary as the conception of God may in form and adjuncts, the idea never fails. The idea must be universal, for the conditions of its existence are universal. What is and must be universal is natural, and what is natural as well as universal is proper and reliable. Accordingly, man is a religious being by nature. Worship is a necessity with him. But worship implies an object worshipped. God is postulated in every prayer. Analogy confirms the fact, for every other human affection has its own object, and if the corresponding object fails here, the anomaly is inexplicable, especially as it occurs in a matter of supreme concern. It is of less consequence that there should be no mother to answer to the child's cry, than no God to hear and accept man's adorations. The sigh of the soul after God supposes a God after whom the soul may sigh. That out-going and up-rising of man's heart is the result of an external attraction. God draws his children to himself, and his children, yielding to the invitation, go into his presence and fall at his fatherly knees.

This attraction is ceaseless as well as universal. It begins with the morning's dawn and ends not with the evening's shade. Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter exercise it in various ways. It is felt by the wanderer of the desert, the inhabitant of cities, the native of polar regions, the dweller under the ardours of the tropics. Coming forth from the whole universe, it now descends from the starry firmament, now breathes forth in the odorous breeze, now rushes down from Alpine heights, and now emerges from the tranquil ocean, or wells forth from the moss-covered fount.

Equally is the sentiment unavoidable. You may harden your heart against the son of your womb, but you cannot wholly close it against God. If you live according to the laws of your nature, you are sure to have the idea of God, and scarcely less sure are you to have it if your course of existence is unnatural and, as such, depraving.

Moreover, the sentiment is improvable. While existing, as if in virtue of its own prerogative, it ever admits of less and more; and while it aids to carry its possessor upwards, it ever ascends as he rises in the scale of being. It is, indeed, man's most powerful moral lever. The Perfect One perfects all at whose side He stands.

It follows that man's religious sense is educatable, and that the growth, vigour, and vividness of our idea of God is the result of our own fidelity to the moral discipline through which we pass. The nearer we are to God the more we feel his presence, and the more we feel his presence the more we press to his side.

What is all this but man's recognition of his Maker? Directly and indirectly the whole of our individual lives is a recognition of God. The recognition may be tacit, indirect, even unconscious, it is none the less real. Often without our will, and sometimes even against it, we own God, if only in a throb of gratitude, or a pang of penitence. We can no more escape from God, from the thought, the fear, the love, in some way, the recognition of him, than we can escape from ourselves. His presence encloses us in its embraces and will not let us go.

THE BIBLE—ITS CHARACTER, FUNCTION, AND SPECIFIC VALUE.

These facts are declared by the entire history of the human species. They are declared also by that excellent epitome of it—the Bible. The Bible, which as containing more of the word of God than any other book, I might safely have said than all other books, may well be called "The Word of God," places man from first to last in the moral order, and in that same order reveals to him God. Mark, I say, "*reveals* to him God." Revelation is the special function of the Bible. The Bible removes the veils which hide God from man, and shows the former to the latter. Those veils are the scales which sin and ignorance have placed on our mortal eyes. The Bible touches our eyes, and we see—we see him whom we desire to see, and the sight of whom is nobleness as well as peace and bliss. Especially does the Bible accomplish its work by arousing, refining, strengthening, and perfecting our sense of duty. To know what we owe to God, and to pay what we owe, is to know God in very deed, for it involves the inmost fellowship of our spirit with his spirit.

But Renan puts in an objection to the document (See. p. 11). The demurrer is of no value, for it is contradicted by the general voice of civilised humanity. The Bible, which is the moral Cosmos, evidences its own divinity, while it declares and proclaims God so as to need no defence. None but such as are dead to moral and religious sentiment can deny that in its general tenor the Bible is no less divine than human in its origin and effects. Amid all its diversities the Bible is *THE Book*, that is the one Book, the Book whose unity is God's appeal to man on behalf of man's highest and everlasting as well as immediate good. The sixty-six books of the canon were produced successively in a period of some fifteen centuries by more than thirty authors, in different forms of language, and in the most diverse positions and circumstances. Each writer impressed on his products traces of his own character. Nevertheless, we find throughout, yea, from the first chapter to the last, one aim and spirit, one great fact, one clear and determinate plan, implicating three great realities, (1) man's value in the sight of God, (2) man's need of God, and (3) God's pitying and succouring love toward man. This plan pervades the book, like the nervous system which

produces unity in man's living organism. This capital fact may be described as God's love in self-communication, as the manifestations of God's wisdom, holiness, and power in the gradual establishment of his kingdom, that is, his spiritual rule and sway on earth. Every great idea in the book has its source in the creative love, holiness, and wisdom of God. To this, in strict logic, all its movements are referable. This is the vital point which forms its centre, the grand thought which unites all its parts, which contains the explanation of insulated passages, and which, discriminating the human from the divine, the Hebraic from the humanitarian, and the transient from the everlasting, gives forth its true sense and sounds out its genuine tone. And just as every living creature, coming from God's hands (*e.g.*, the human body), infinitely surpasses, in the delicacy of its details, and the oneness of its whole, the most marvellous works of man, his least imperfect machines, his most brilliant systems—as every organism thus declares and attests its divine origin even by the very mode of its existence—so the archives of the kingdom God, such as they are presented to us in the Bible, bear witness to the eyes of impartial and conscientious students that they are the product as much of the hand of God as of the hand of man. Thus, when you have eliminated from its pages the accessory but needful *media* through which God's mind is made known, you find the Bible pervaded by one and the same spirit, the Spirit of God, and pervaded in such a manner that all the parts, chronologically arranged, prepare each for its successor, complete, and justify themselves reciprocally, and have, like the links in a chain, their place and value successively in the entire structure and general result. The Bible, considered as a whole, contains nothing but conduces to its aim, purpose, and efficiency. No signs of chance does it offer, but like an oak, the venerable growth of a century, it is the simple evolution of the acorn out of which it came, and which represents and indicates the Divine Intelligence as actuated by the Divine Love.

One characteristic of the Bible is that it is understood, loved, and revered, no less by the most ordinary minds than the most exalted geniuses. It is the common altar where men, whatever their age or culture, unite to bend their knees. The reason is found in its wonderful fecundity in the revelations which it makes of the absolute. So diverse are they as to suit at once the child and the sage; so rich as to leave no mood of our many-sided nature unappealed to or ungratified; and so powerful as to melt the most obdurate, to prostrate the most arrogant, to transform the most reluctant, to quicken the morally dead, and to train and perfect the saint, while they convert and sanctify the sinner. To him who searches men's hearts, what myriads of instances of its transcendent efficacy appear in their individual forms and lives.

Thus peculiar in its effects, the Bible must have some one

central peculiarity. It is even so. The Bible owns sin as a fact, treats sin as a disease, supplying a suitable and effectual remedy. The Bible is not merely a book of ethics, though its ethics, as being founded in God, transcend all ordinary systems of morality. It goes deeper still. Descending into the depth of the Divine nature, it sees realities respecting man as they are seen of God. Consequently it knows and ever implies that man is "Weary and heavy laden," because the slave of sin. Here is the too prolific source of human disorder and suffering. Man has, by disobedience, made for himself an abnormal position, and is, in consequence, out of the universal order whence come the well-being, efficiency, and beauty of the universe. Until the broken wheel be removed from the mechanism, collision, perhaps dissolution, certainly danger and loss, are inevitable. The actual disorder is universal. A universal evil requires a universal remedy. Here lies the final end of the Bible, and here lies also its supreme eulogy. The Bible is given to cure that common disease; and the disease it was given to cure it cures in fact. This is known by all that have unreservedly placed themselves under its reviving remedial, and restorative influence. And it heals, not as man attempts to heal, that is, by severe and exhausting measures, nor by rigorous and minute prescriptions, but rather by quickening the system, by pouring in and calling out elements of new and higher life, suppressing evil by supplying and substituting good. A process of the kind has but one source. It is of God. Human wisdom is too contracted, human power too inconsiderable, human love too defective to furnish a remedy and a discipline such as this. The Bible is God's "way of salvation," and this is the only way which leadeth from death unto life.

The Bible, like its Divine Author, will not be withstood. More or less of homage it exacts from all who come within its reach. Even its assailants have been compelled, by its intrinsic qualities to acknowledge and publish its value. Goethe can scarcely be said to have entered the portico of the Christian Church, yet he declares:—

"The Bible owes to the worth of its contents the veneration with which it is environed among all the nations of the globe. It is not so much a popular book as the *Popul's Bible*, for it describes the lot of one people as the symbol of the lot of all, connects its history with the Origin and the Author of the World, and follows man's earthly and spiritual development, through a long series of events over the fields of time and into the regions of eternity."

"When," he adds, "you subjoin what is desirable for a right understanding of its own history and the due eliciting of its general import, the work is seen to deserve being restored to its ancient position, not only as a universal book but as a universal library; and, in truth, the more civilisation shall advance the more will it be made useful, not indeed by the fools but the sages of the world, in part as the basis, in part as the instrument of education."—"Faust", 138.

To the same effect is his utterance given in "Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe:"—

"How much soever spiritual culture may make progress, the natural sciences broaden and deepen, and the human mind enlarge, the world will never get beyond the loftiness and moral culture of Christianity as it shines and glitters in the Gospels."—(iii., 37.)

Alexander von Humboldt, the greatest naturalist of modern times, says :—

"The lyric poetry of the Hebrews displays the life of nature in all its plenitude. It may be affirmed that the 103rd Psalm is in itself an outline of the universe. The Book of Job has as much picturesque charm in the painting of each phenomenon as art in the didactic tenor of the whole."

His brother William asserts :—

"If the well-instructed man enjoys the privilege of penetrating more deeply into the Bible, there is no one that is not benefited by its perusal, for it is an inexhaustible source of consolation, of efficacious consolation."

Müller, the great German historian, has these words :—

"In reading the ancient authors I found a marvellous preparation for Christianity, so exactly does every thing correspond to the divine plan traced by the Apostles."

Professor Scheitlin says :—

"The Bible contains in its central thoughts the waters of life. If a rich abundance of ideas, joined to the utmost variety of forms, betokens the excellence of a work, the Bible holds a place of its own. In consequence it has outlived all the combats, all the tempests, and all the questionings of successive ages."

"Whence, but from heaven, could men unskilled in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? Or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price."—Dryden.

These are the opinions of men of literature and science. They spoke from the position of general culture. Let us hear the verdict of the highest biblical scholarship and experience :—

"This most important, and in its kind peculiar collection of books, which has now for nearly 2,000 years served as the means of religious culture to the first nations of the earth, occupied the ability and the diligence of so many scholars, spread abroad an incalculable blessing, and translated into hundreds of languages, obtained a circulation that is truly astounding, was, in relation to its first and in extent larger portion, sanctioned in its fundamental principles, as the sacred canon of his nation, by the Founder of Christianity, who in part expounded, and in part expanded and ennobled its pure and lofty teachings."—Gesenius; Erseh and Gruber, sec. 1, vol. 1.

"If we put together the particular facts connected with the translation of the Bible into modern tongues, we have before our eyes one of the most noble, most holy, most pregnant, and most beneficial undertakings of modern Christendom. We behold a continual progression, a constant natural growth, an organic labour in a huge enterprise, the translation as of the holiest, so far as the most learned book of the world. The book itself is one on which, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, more than two thousand years of scientific labour has been bestowed. Moreover, in the first centuries of the Reformation,

there was applied to the entire Bible a kind and a degree of scholarship of which modern days have not even a suspicion. The preparation of this volume was not intended for a priesthood, but for the people at large, and the living tongue of the people was thereby enriched with germs of a new vitality. All this was not the result of a sacerdotal or a secular authority, but the fruit of free popular inspiration and self-sacrifice. In it the individual appears as the organ of the popular spirit, by which, indeed, he is called forth and sustained. But no sooner has the popular spirit obtained the benefit than it incorporates it, lives on it, and carries it to perfection. And how marvellous and world-wide have been the consequences of the diffusion of the sacred volume which ensued. In the degree in which the Bible was thus transmuted into the vernacular, and appropriated by the people, their speech and their literature became Christian, and the several nations themselves became moral, pious, and free in corresponding union and concord. It is on the Bible, as the family manual, the church manual, the school manual, and as the touchstone of all worldly things, that depends religious freedom, political freedom, nor less the welfare, the progress, the dominion of the Anglo-Saxon races on this side and on that of the Atlantic Ocean. It is the Bible with which and through which the morality, the liberty, the efficiency of individual and independent life are introduced into all parts of the world. It is the Bible which makes rude and poor languages into tongues capable of expressing the loftiest thoughts of God, and God's government in human society, lifts barbarous and brutalised hordes into moral and responsible communities, and brings into view the divine image they bear, as by a stroke from a magician's wand. Call to mind the transformations it has effected in Tahiti and New Zealand."—Chevalier Bunsen = "Bibelwerk" I., 21.

"The Bible. That's the book, the book, indeed,
 The book of books ;
 On which who looks,
 As he should do, aright, shall never need
 Wish for a better light
 To guide him in the night.

Or when he hungry is, for better food
 To feed upon,
 Than this alone,
 If he bring stomach and digestion good ;
 And if he be amiss,
 This the best physic is.

God's cabinet of revealed counsel 'tis,
 Where weal and woe
 Are ordered so,
 That every man may know which shall be his ;
 Unless his own mistake
 False application make.

It is the index to eternity ;
 He cannot miss
 Of endless bliss,
 That takes this chart to steer his voyage by,
 Nor can he be mistook,
 That speaketh by this book.

A book to which no book can be compared
 For excellence ;
 Pre-eminence
 Is proper to it, and can not be shared.
 Divinity alone
 Belongs to it—or none.

It is the Book of God. What if I should

Say, God of books?

Let him that looks

Angry at this expression as too bold,

His thoughts in silence smother,

Till he find such another."—George Herbert.

With augmented reason and greater emphasis I return to the truth that the Bible places both God and man, the teacher and the pupil, in their moral order. The fact declares negatively that the intellect is not *the* way to God, nor the imagination, nor the sciences, nor speculation, but simply the heart and the life. Accordingly the Bible never undertakes to prove God. Not one argument does it present from first to last in order to demonstrate God's existence. Neither Moses, nor Isaiah, nor Christ, nor Paul give a formal proof of God. On the contrary, they take the fact for granted. It is with them a primary truth, no more to be denied, questioned, or established than that man lives, loves, wastes away, and dies.

It is singular that this undeniable fact should not have fixed the attention of men to whom the Bible is the great religious charter book of humanity. Surely there must be meaning in the circumstance, and surely the ground and reason thereof ought to be ascertained, and, when ascertained, honoured by observance. Yet is it in the schools where Christ is professedly served that a method is practised which practically supersedes the Biblical method. What else are all those formal proofs of God's existence with which the school manuals are full? The result? Each is found defective or erroneous in turn; and yet the disputers go on to forge new syllogistic forms to prove what needs no proof whatever. Such is the blinding and perverting influence of logical analysis and speculation when it undertakes tasks as much beyond its strength as they are needless and nugatory. As well try to supply a logical proof of their own existence, of the existence of an outer universe, of existence itself. Something must be assumed as the basis of argument. You cannot prove a thing unless by means of what is simpler or more certain than what you want to prove. What! is any thing more simple or more certain than that God is, than life in its root? Yet, if nothing is certain all things are uncertain. Unless I am allowed to say "I am," I can never get to the conclusion that "thou art," or "he is." But, if I may safely affirm my own existence, I, in that affirmation, affirm existence itself, and may be easily led to affirm yours and God's. God's being is interwoven with mine and yours to such an extent as to be owned in the usages and necessities of language. Indeed, the simple phrase *I am* implies an object as well as a subject, and places both in the category of life. Man is twofold—a being of whom something is said, and that something is simply himself in a second aspect. Thus I and me are equally realities, both being

forms or relations of being or existence, and both implicating the one the other. As such they are an epitome of existence in general and of the universe in particular, and thus they include God and God's manifestation—the highest form and the ultimate essence of life.

But here let it be observed we have not a proof, but a disclosure, and a disclosure not so prominent as to strike ordinary eyes. No human thought can compass God. No abstraction approaches the reality. God, exactly and fully apprehended by man, would be God reduced to the proportions of the finite. So long as you remain in the intellectual order you are confined within its narrow bounds, and it is only in the moral order, which has a species of infinitude in its resemblance to God, that you can expect to approach the divine reality. And even here all depends on your own attitude. One pang of godly repentance will do more to bring God within your vision than all the metaphysical picklocks you can invent. Of that attitude, while a sense of want and an earnest yearning are essential, one inseparable condition is moderation. Expect not too much. It were better to say—expect nothing, but be grateful for what you receive. If you approach the problem in the arrogant and defiant spirit of criticism, you will utterly fail. If you go with a predetermination to accept all or refuse all, you will obtain nothing. God, so to say, ever recedes from the eye of bold and scrutinising curiosity. He yields not to violence. He even humiliates the daring by defeat. They retire abashed from his awful presence, because they have tried to force an entrance into it with feet shod with the speculations and pride of the schools.

“Dost thou think thou canst fathom God's wisdom?
 Canst thou reach the perfection of the Almighty?
 It is higher than the heavens—canst thou attain to it?
 It is deeper than hell—canst thou get to its bottom?
 Its measure is longer than the earth,
 And wider than the sea;
 But if thou directest thy heart toward God,
 If thou spreadest out thy hands to him;
 If thou puttest evil away from thee,
 And sufferest no iniquity in thy tent,
 The future will rise before thee brilliant as mid-day,
 The darkness of the present will become light as morning.
 Thou wilt be full of confidence and hope.”—Job xi.

Well did the Apostle Paul indicate to the reasoners and wits of Athens, the metropolis of philosophy, the sole proper way of seeking God. He bids them, and through his word to them, bids us and all men “feel after him.” (Acts xvii., 27). “To feel after him;”—it is the act of one who is and knows that he is in darkness—be it total, be it partial. Eyes has he, but he sees not, and, consequently, he resorts to the use of hands. And ever as he gropes to feel his way, he is diffident and cautious; eager and

even anxious for light ; and if but a faint glimmer rises before him, he is glad and thankful. With the revival of his spirit his courage revives, and he presses forwards in the direction of the welcome gleam ; but still with some timidity and care. At last he emerges out of darkness into light, and is rewarded by his fully-restored power of glad activity.

Such is a sketch of the true seeker after God. Observe that he is a seeker. No indifferentist ; he desires, and he acts on his desire, to know God, assured that the knowledge of God is the possession of all real good. And this his righteous endeavour is made in a childlike spirit. Often in his youth had he failed in attempting to unravel the secret things of his father's conduct and the mysteries of his mother's love ; and hence he has learnt to feel his way into the deep things of God with self-distrust, and mild but unyielding perseverance. Moreover, as he gains light, he does not complain of either its dimness or its smallness. Enough for him that it is a spark. Profiting by the light he has, he gains more light, and still more, because he seeks divine truth in the love of it and not in the love of himself, or of some artificially constructed theory which he wishes to substantiate.

The essential element of this propitious state of mind is the recognition of a source of light out of and higher than himself. Conscious self-sufficiency will never find out God. He who thirsts for the Infinite, being finite himself, will search in vain if he directs his eye solely within his own intellect. Such a man is not on the road which leads to spiritual perfection. He that has nothing to look up to has no leverage for moral elevation. You must be sure that if you look up to God, God will look down on you and lift you up nearer and nearer to himself :—if this faith is not in you you have no master of whom to learn, and consequently can be taught nothing.

But as the worshipper seeks God, so on his part God seeks the worshipper. It is Christ himself who said, "the Father *seeketh* such to worship him ;" that is, he seeketh such as are possessed and actuated by the right spirit, and seeking these he seeks all, in order that they may become such. This important truth places our subject in a new light. God is not indifferent to man's position in regard to himself. He does not hide himself from us as if he wished not to be known. He does not keep apart as if caring more for his own glory than our good. He does not bid us find him if we can. He does not even merely disclose himself. He *seeks* his children, and he seeks them because he knows that without him they are without their highest good ; and he seeks them because he would encourage them in turn to seek him. The father cannot but seek the child. How earnestly, how lovingly, how unwearyingly God seeks even the wandering and the lost is made clear by Jesus in parables of touching tenderness and unfading beauty. (Luke xv.) What, indeed, is the whole economy

of the Bible but God going forth in quest of his children, who roam in the wilderness of sense, or pine and waste away under the ravages of sin? (Is. lv.)

In other words, revelation is God's method of making himself known to the children of men, and in the way of revelation must they come to him, or remain in darkness, which would be true but that God in a measure makes himself known even to those whom he is denied. That one word—Revelation—is the key to God's actual dealings with the human race. Do not commit the error of supposing that revelation excludes education. Rather is education the process, and revelation the result. By discipline does God open men's ears to wisdom. (Job xxxvi., 10.) By discipline does he remove from our eyes the films by which we are blinded to his presence. This removal began in Eden, and has been going on ever since, and will not come to an end until all see as we are seen, and know as we are known of God.

Its most general character has been exactly and finely described by that great "steward of the mysteries of God," the Apostle to the Gentiles, when he declares that even to those whom God suffered to "walk in their own ways," "He left not himself without witness." And wherein did that witness consist? "In that he did good, and gave rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filled men's hearts with food and gladness." (Acts xiv., 16.) And what was the burden of the testimony? That men should "turn from their vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." The witness, then, was an appeal, and an appeal not to man's logical faculty, but to his inmost intelligent nature.

(1). *God's benefactions bear witness of himself.* He makes his creatures glad, and so makes them grateful, and the glad and grateful heart turns spontaneously to the Divine Fountain of good. This is the way God argues with men, and one such argument does more than all the dry and unmoving ratiocination of the schools. This motive power, at work ages before Paley, has been in operation ever since, and still addresses the reader and the writer. What can we do but yield our hearts to such an appeal? When we receive that good in the return of spirit, accompanied by its genial suns, its warm breath, its singing birds, its odorous flowers, its savoury fruits, its reanimation, and vigour, and hope; its brightened eye, its elastic step, its vigorous arm, as bestowed on ourselves, can we help being borne upwards by gratitude, love, and veneration to the Great Benefactor, who seems to stand there before us, shedding blessings from his full hand over his human family, as with the impartiality, so with the liberality of a father—the Infinite Father? The recognition of God we thus make acts favourably on our whole man. In other words: God rewards this childlike acknowledgment by making it prolific in good. God's benefits are doubled by our gratitude.

Here, again, God bears witness to himself in the happy consequence of our piety and thankfulness, while that piety and that thankfulness in their turn call forth obedience, and obedience increases peace as well as faith, so that God and man thus acting and re-acting the one on the other, the Father is glorified in the child, and the child is perfected by the Father.

Fear not, my fellow-seeker after God, to trust yourself in unreserved faith and reverent love to a witness so natural, so beneficial, so divine.

This is the first illustration I give of the way in which God bears witness of himself to man. The Psalmist made use of it in the palmy days of Hebrew poetry. (Ps. xix.)

"The heavens declare the glory of God,
And the firmament sheweth the work of his hands.
Day to day uttereth speech,
And night to night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech and no words,
No voice is heard,
Yet through all the earth their sound goeth forth,
And their words to the end of the world."

Speaking and showing are God's method of teaching. Both are internal in their operation, even as they are spiritual in their origin and their aim. There is no speech, yet is there instruction; and no finger, yet is there pointing; and no sign, yet is there manifestation and display; and these declare, yes *declare*, proclaim the glory of God. This is the message which the heavens send down to the dwellers on earth. When the poem was written, the impression made by that majestic sun and that mysterious night in those eastern skies was, if deep and pervasive, and even at times overwhelming, yet comparatively general and vague. Now it ought to be more exact without being less wonderful, for now we know that all the celestial movements obey law, one law, and hence are full of order and harmony, so as to tell of "the glory of God" in strains that satisfy the head, and assure the heart, and delight the imagination, as well as call forth, foster, and refine devout awe and intelligent veneration.

II. *God also bears witness of himself in man considered as his image and likeness.* In that image and likeness lies our capability of knowing God. Likeness reveals, unlikeness repels. The child knows its nurse, the pebble obstructs the brook, If we are like God, we possess something in common with God. That something touches the essence of both. What is most God-like? To create. If so, man has a creative or causal force. And is not such the declaration of man's history? Very different is the earth now to what it was when yet untrodden by human foot. At present it is covered as with God's gifts so with man's creations. The result is the prevalence of man's dominion over the face of the civilised globe. Yet is the exercise of this creative power

limited and conditioned. Like every thing belonging to man, is dependent on time and space, increasing and decreasing, advancing here and receding there, though when viewed from remote points and at distant intervals, gaining ground continually and so promising to cover the earth as the water covers the bottom of the sea. Wherever its products prevail they fail not mirror their Infinite Author and Source. Thus man may be considered as God in miniature, and God the full and perfect original of man. They each reflect the other. The image throws back the Original; the Original casts down the image. And as no Original no image, so the image implies the Original of which it is a reflection. Thus, as every child pre-supposes a father, so every man pre-supposes God. Inevitably is your mind carried from the sight of a child to the thought of its father, for it will not let you rest until you have arrived at an adequate cause. Accordingly you cannot stop with man even when contemplating the products of his hands, for they denote a higher power, and own no ultimate resting place until they are linked with the Absolute and Self-Subsistent Creator.

Nor are you to suppose that even here you are out of the moral order. Great as is the power of intellect, far greater is the power of character as manifested in man's achievements. Mere intellect is as likely to destroy as to create, and only when it acts from righteous motives, pursues benevolent aims, and moves with the momentum of moral force, is it effective for and prolific in creation. Accordingly, man's benefactions are his true and most effectual witness of man to God. And on the other side, God bears witness of himself in all the virtuous deeds and all the useful discoveries which man's hand has spread so abundantly over his dwelling place. Thus viewed, every advance of science is a witness of God. When Galileo saw the earth going round the sun, when Newton resolved the movements of the heavenly bodies into the one law of gravity, when Franklin identified lightning and electricity, they each beheld and heard a witness borne of God to himself. If so, then the entire earth, and the expanded skies, and the multitudinous universe combine in the grand and accordant testimony which God bears of himself. And this testimony owes its existence and validity to the correspondence there is between God and man. Did not man resemble God, he could not even hear God's witness of himself, much less interpret its import and feel its force. As it is, the whole intelligent man is God's witness of himself. Especially is God seen, heard, and owned in man's moral and spiritual nature. Every function that man exercises is a divinely supplied witness of God.

III. *Pre-eminently and emphatically does God bear witness of himself in conscience.* What is conscience? Menander has well defined it as God—"to all mortals conscience is God." An illustration may be supplied in an incident recorded of himself by Theodore Parker:—

“When a little boy, in my fourth year, one fine day in spring my father led me by the hand to a distant part of the farm, but soon sent me home again. On the way I had to pass a little pond, then spreading its waters wide. A rhodora, in full bloom—a rare flower—attracted my attention, and drew me to the place. I saw a little spotted tortoise sunning himself in the shallow water at the root of the flaming shrub. I lifted the stick I had in my hand to strike the harmless reptile; for though I had never killed any creature, I had seen other boys out of sport destroy birds, squirrels, and the like; and I felt a disposition to follow their wicked example. But all at once something checked my little arm, and a voice within me said, clear and loud, ‘It is wrong!’ I held back my uplifted stick in wonder at the new emotion, the consciousness of an involuntary, but inward check upon my actions, till the tortoise and the rhodora both vanished from sight. I hastened home and told the tale to my mother, and asked what it was that told me it was wrong. She wiped a tear from her eye with her apron, and, taking me in her arms, said, ‘Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guide you right. Your life depends on heeding this little voice.’ She went her way, careful and troubled about many things, while I went off to wonder and think it over in my poor childish way. But I am sure no event in my life has made so deep and lasting impression upon me.—Life, by Dr. Réville, p. 9.

That motherly interpretation was right. Conscience is God’s voice in man. Conscience is God in man’s moral nature. The word denotes two beings, two who have mutual knowledge, for such is the etymological meaning of the term. Conscience in French sometimes denotes consciousness, that is my knowledge of myself. Here, too, we find two, one who knows, the other who is known. But, considered in its ordinary English sense, conscience signifies not merely the subject and the object as united in one person, but two persons. A person may be defined as an intelligent being possessing an independent will. Now, take Parker’s anecdote. He himself willed to strike the tortoise, but was prevented by another. Another what? Clearly a will. It could not be his own will, for it was in direct antagonism therewith. If another’s will, whose? Its character gives the answer. It was God’s, for it was good. Not only was it good, but authoritative and supreme. It suspended that stick. Not only did it prevail in that particular case, but it exercised control over Parker’s whole life. He never forgot that uplifted hand, he never forgot that prohibition. Our own individual experience runs parallel with Parker’s. Our conscience is *another’s* voice speaking in our heart. It has all the attributes of another, of another will. The voice comes unbidden, says what it pleases, says often what we least wish to hear, and returns or tarries at its own pleasure. The only way in which we can relieve ourselves of its presence is by obedience. Obey and we are at peace, disobey and we are rebuked, condemned, punished, sometimes sorely punished. How can these facts be if only one will is concerned? For myself I do my utmost to evade or frustrate that will. I pretend or strive not to hear it. The only effect is that its tones are louder, more penetrating, more authoritative, and more minatory. That will fights with my own, and fights until it has overcome its opponent.

The power cannot be engendered of my own nature, for it is its assailant. Two natures clearly are there in me, the one impelling me in this direction, the other drawing me in that. In other words, I am acted on by two wills—the one righteous and all-powerful, the other wicked and comparatively weak. Then mark the respective consequences: I follow the wicked will and am ruined; I follow the righteous will and become peaceful, effective for good, and noble in act as well as aim. What is that righteous will thus expressing itself in a wicked man but the will of God! The conclusion is unavoidable, for the power is not only sovereign in its control and efficacy, but wise, good, benignant. That punishing hand is not a rod I apply to my own back, for I do my utmost to stop or evade its blows.

This is the clearest and fullest witness which God bears of himself to man.

I have hitherto spoken only of the faculty of conscience, of conscience as a moral, punitive, corrective, and all-prevailing power—potentate I should have said. But conscience involves two wills, the human no less than the divine. As involving the human, it partakes of human liabilities; and these are moral weaknesses, moral transgressions, moral neglects, together with their equally inevitable consequences in moral perversion, decay, decline, and death. This sad, this terrible array of evils are severally the punishments by which God, in conscience, strives with his wilful and guilty child. Whether the death is ever total, whether, in the worst cases, God leaves the wicked entirely and exclusively to themselves, whether his absence is final and his return impossible, we need not here inquire. Enough for my purpose, which is to mark the distinction that exists between conscience as a faculty and conscience as an active agent. The former is alike infallible and absolute, and so asserts its divinity; the latter is beset with faults and weaknesses, and so avouches its humanity. Objects so diverse must not be confounded, but confounded they are when some plead the errors and vices of conscience as an impeachment of its authority. Those errors and vices are man's products, which God strove to prevent and still strives to remove.

I have just referred to the vitality of conscience, avoiding to assert that it is inextinguishable. Yet, relatively, inextinguishable it certainly is, and so appears to possess the central quality of God. It has life in itself. It has substantial and independent life. Recede from our view it may, but only in its manifestation; for, let the silent chord be touched by a cunning hand, and the true note is sure to be heard. The sweet smile of his innocent babe has been known to recall the apparently departed vitality of the convict condemned for his crimes to suffer death. That recall led to repentance, confession, and such atonement as the circumstances permitted, saving a soul alive for the higher and more effectual discipline of eternity.

Conscience is God in man's moral nature. The proposition is in harmony with the fact of God's omnipresence. An actual, not a nominal omnipresence, places God in the universe, if only because it places God everywhere. Could there be any exception, surely it is not in that sphere which, as the seat of moral, is emphatically God's own abiding place—the seat of his power, the throne of his empire, the focus of his love, the centre of his majesty.

No other view of conscience explains its known phenomena. You say it is a product of mere human influences, of laws, customs, institutions, usages, you obtain a something which cannot ascend higher than its source, and so cannot possess those noble attributes which we have been led to acknowledge in conscience. Society may modify the form and expression of conscience, but cannot create its divine faculty and function. What creates the difference between that tortured Blandina and her persecutors? The two belong to the servile class, and certainly received nearly the same impress from society. Yet the one riots in cruelty, and the other bears the cruelty with calm and patient stoicism. Surely the pure and lofty qualities of an Abauzit, a saint Saint-Etienne, a Socrates, indicate a divine source. Deny this avowment and you deprive the world of all true and reliable criterion and test of the divine. If in their measure and degree these persons had not a divine element in them, we have no solid ground and of assurance that Jesus was divine no less than human.

The avenging power of conscience proclaims its divinity. Witness the crowd of unhappy mortals whom intolerable remorse has driven to suicide. This was the terror from which Judas sought escape in self-inflicted death. History is full of similar instances. Madness flies in madness from city to city, and land to land, pursued by the furies of conscience, whose office it is to punish him for the unnatural crime of murdering his mother, Clytemnestra, or for seeking to avenge the death of his father, Agamemnon. Indeed, the tragic muse of Greece labours and groans under the burden of the mournful strain of divine retribution. Nowhere does the popular conscience sink below that of eminent individuals or cultivated classes. Often, indeed, its note is at once more noble, pure, genuine, persistent, and efficacious than that of any other utterance of conscience. It is this formidable power which, when fully aroused, makes faithless priests tremble, and purple thrones turn pale, shaking society to its foundations, and, it may be, revolutionising continents or the civilised world. *Vox populi vox dei*, the voice of an avenging people is truly the voice of God.

God is conscience let us own the fact in all its simplicity and grandeur. It is the title of man's nobility. *Deus est in nobis*. He is in us, and we cannot, therefore, be wholly mean. And if He is in us, let us seek him there. Too often, very much too often, we seek for God everywhere but in conscience. This is the

great fault of the metaphysician who seeks God in either his own narrow intellect, or in the mere surface of the material universe. This is no less the fault of the ordinary religionist who seeks God "above," on some fancied Christian Olympus, and so gropes in darkness and deadness, which cast back on himself their huge funereal shadows. One effect is a craving for visible tokens of God, leading to the unvivifying externalities of Romanism and High Churchism. Another, and a more general effect, is the sunderance of religion from morality, which kills both, and leaves in their place creeds, confessions, ritualisms, long prayers; asceticism in the temple, and dishonesty behind the counter and on the mart. Far less frequent would these serious mistakes and woeful evils be were God owned and worshipped in "the Holy of Holies" of conscience. Then morality and religion would go hand in hand, the latter the inspiring force, the former the pure, self-denying, and lofty product. Tried by the Saviour's test: "By their fruits shall you know them," worshippers would then be filled with the Spirit of God, because worshipping no longer in name but in reality.

iv. Again, *God manifests himself in the pure heart.* It is the sixth beauty I have in view: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. v., 6.) In scriptural language "the heart" denotes our moral qualities, which, concentrating themselves in affections, desires, and purposes, affect the conscience and determine the will. This, then, is the human side of conscience, and what our Lord means is that, when the human side is pure the whole man is pure, and conscience works with the united power of God and man. This is true moral efficiency, and this is true moral perfection. God and man one in affection, aim, and effort, work out that holiness "without which no man shall see the Lord," but with which every man will see God in his perfect and complete moral beauty. The act of vision, like the faculty, is of course moral and spiritual; and moral too is the reflected image of the Deity cast on the retina of faith. Hence, heart-purity is the best mirror of God. It resembles the pellucid water of some mountain lake in which the beholder sees his own image reproduced, line for line, and feature for feature. A perfectly moral life in man is the least insufficient portrait of God. Observe, that here it is the sense of sight from which the metaphor is drawn. Sight is more than sound, and more than knowledge. It is visual perception; and as such vivid in its communications, prompt and exact in its revivals, and no less fresh and impressive than permanent in its recollections. The pure heart ever sees God, and so is moved more deeply, vivaciously, impressively, and lastingly than can be done by the ear, or the touch, or the taste. God, then, bears witness of himself in the pure of heart. That purity is a ray of his own holiness. The pure heart beats in all its pulses in union with God. The blood of its life is not animal,

ctual, still less carnal, but moral, saintly, holy. It is of God and goodness for themselves—that love which meaner loves, and leaves God and God's Christ bearing in the heart, with a gentleness and a love transcending a petty sovereignty compared with which that of the earthly monarch is poor, tame, and inconsiderable. How the life of heart shadows forth God may be seen in the life of a saintly mother. Ordinary words are too weak to express the reverent affection with which she is regarded and loved. A species of divinity seems to encircle her, for all her passions and affections have passed into the ripe love of loving obedience to God and loving service to home, and she draws a wide circle beyond home as a searching eye and a steady hand can reach. Venerable woman, true Christian gentleness and sweetness and beneficence of thy savour is a savour of life, and so a savour of God. "Blessed are the hearts for they see God," and, in addition, show forth holiness as well as the grandeur of divine and human life when fused into one power.

bears witness of himself in man's spiritual nature. Holiness is the Christian expression of the last testimony. The Holy Spirit is God's spirit of holiness as manifested through the heart of the true disciple. How can Christian people be satisfied with a God such as that with which Elijah rebuked the worshippers of Baal:—"Cry aloud, for your God is with you; he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and awaketh." No wonder that practices not wholly unlike the Baalites dishonour religion at the present hour:—"They cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out upon them." (xviii., 26.) A God subject to the limitations of place is no God at all. If God is everywhere but in me, I may worship where without him. The only true and living God is revealed by the prophet Jeremiah (xxiii., 23), "Am I a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places and I will not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah." Yes, and therefore God occupies conscience and man's heart, and since he has revealed himself in Christ, it is after the image of Christ that he dwells in the hearts of Christian men. This indwelling spirit of God fills the believer's heart with "the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v., 22.) What are all these qualities but so many rays of the divine glory, which draw the eye to God, their centre and source, even as the sun draws the beholder's eye upwards to the sun.

Truly this is a sublime yet touching witness that God dwells in himself, and it is all the more acceptable, and all the

more influential, because it is the simple and natural result of the Christian's experience of the life of God in his life. High and enviable state of privilege is that of which faith is the immediate source to the soul. How poor, superficial, and mean the ordinary acceptance of God produced in the schools by the least ineffectual of arguments, or in the churches by the most logically compacted creeds. This, indeed, is that state of spiritual vision and enjoyment, that union of love and hope which Paul pronounces better than even faith, even as a cup of cold water is better to the parched lips of the waylaid and maimed traveller than the whole river whence it was taken. The fruitions of love and hope are the fruitions of God himself.

What, however, I chiefly aim at in this fifth example of God bearing witness of himself is the genesis, growth, and maturation of the idea of God which we find in the Bible. Here a chronological difficulty stands in my way. Do its first leaves contain its oldest records, and is the order of its pages generally identical with the order of time? Scientific theology answers the question in the negative, while, however, asserting a greater departure from sameness of sequence between the two than facts warrant or history will allow. I shall endeavour to leave the hindrance on one side, basing my remarks on a few undoubted facts.

From the statement made in Genesis xxxi., 19, to the effect that Rachel stole her father's images (*teraphim*), compared with another statement in Genesis xxxi., 34, namely, that she put them under her camel's saddle and sat upon them, we are led to infer that *feticism*, or the worship of charms and idols of the rudest kind, was the earliest form of Hebrew religion (comp. Ezek. xxi. 21). It is also clear that the worship in the days of Jacob was furiously exercised, if not barely tolerated. In other words, it was a decaying superstition. Already the descendants of Abraham were struggling with the image worship out of which that great monotheist had emerged. But while they on their side were rising to purer and higher conceptions of the Divine, the aborigines of the land were sunk in idolatry, having "Gods many and lords many," of whom Moloch, the king of day and the sovereign of the skies, was, with his merciless and gory rites, the principal. If now we turn back to "The Book of the Beginnings," as we have it in the earliest sentences of Genesis, we find this view repeated, and as repeated so confirmed. For the *Elohim* ("God created"), there spoken of, is a plural noun joined with singular verb; thus declaring that polytheism had preceded the existing monotheism, while it left a trace of its anterior existence in the structure of the Hebrew tongue. Interpreted in the light of Oriental usages, the text states that not the old and still to be prevalent powers (so *Elohim* means) had created the heaven and the earth, but all had come forth from the one God, who concentrated in his sublime unity all divine forces, in virtue of which

he had by his will produced the one universe, comprising the one **human race**. This is, indeed, a step in an upward direction—a **step** far more important than we at this time of day can conceive, **much** more represent. Indeed the step marks the birth of true **religion**, if only because it denotes the one Creator, the one **creation**, and the one human family.

This step having been set, all the rest follows as simple and **natural** growth. Monotheism was born, but long, very long had it **to struggle** for existence, and still a longer period had it to pass **before** it rose to ascendancy, and again a third period before it **became** supreme. Even yet it is not the sole ruler of the world, **no**, nor of Christendom. However, it gained a decisive victory over the forces of darkness when Israel, learning wisdom in the Babylonish captivity, returned into his native land to worship "the God of his fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

These scriptural words show how narrow was the sway of Monotheism at the first. Elohim was the God of a clan or a tribe. As such he was known chiefly by the name of *Al Shaddai* ("the Almighty"). But He who was almighty within a narrow circle must of necessity be almighty everywhere. The range expanded in the heart of the thoughtful, until it was seen that the Almighty God must be independent and self-subsistent. The idea took **form** in the name Jehovah or *Jahve*. Critics are not even yet of **one** mind as to the proper signification of the term. Yet its **constituents**, which carry the mind back to the first elements of speech, **seem** to denote two objects, first, *I* and then *being*, equivalent, **when** put together, to *I am*. Looking at the two separately, we **earn** that in this later form God declares himself to be the one *I*, **he** one and sole *I*, the absolute *I*, the *I* which alone in the **universe** has a right to the denomination, and as such the one **ly** Person, Being, God. The claim involves a claim to **cessary** existence :—

"*I*, Jehovah, and none else, no God beside me ; I made the earth and **ted** man upon it ; I, even my hands, stretched out the heavens, and all their **have** I marshalled ; I form the light and create darkness ; I make peace **create** evil ; I, Jehovah, do all these things."—Is. xlv.

o the *I* came the adjunct *am* :—*I am* ; as good as to **e** an emphatic assertion of his being, his and his alone ; of **g**, in the true sense of the word, that is not phenomenal and **hable**, but substantial and everlasting being. When to *I am* **dded**, as in the last cited passage, the term Jehovah and the **God**, the *I am* became *He is*, and thus filled up the whole **ory** of possible existence. Accordingly, Jehovah denotes **lf-existent** One, the living and true God. In other words, **ifies** life, the life, the sole and eternal life in its source, or **the** one Eternal Being, *I* who live, **he** who lives, the one **er**, the Author and Giver of life.

This is another great step. In one view Deity is now fully manifested. God is the one Life-Giver. He who gives has life; has it in and of himself, since no one who receives life can be called, in the proper and full sense of the term—THE LIFE-GIVER.

Jehovah bore two relations. He was first the covenant national God of Israel; and, secondly, through Israel, he became the one living and true God of the human race.

There remained but one step more. It was taken by Jesus when he called Jehovah, Father—"my Father," "your Father," "our Father." The one living and true God, the Creator, is also the Father of all worlds and all men.

The idea of God stands now before the world in substance and form.

For the sake of clearness, I have spoken of this marvelous series of verities as so many steps or stages in a growth or development. Looked at on the human side the view is justified. Looked at more on the divine side, the series denotes so many cycles of revelation. Whether development or revelation, the whole presents a succession which marks the progress of the highest civilisation on earth; the finger posts and signals of which are the successive unfoldings of the sublime and august idea of God. But for those divine manifestations the human race would never have emerged out of its aboriginal barbarism, and back into "the blackness of darkness" would it fall were it possible to retrace the steps of its most auspicious progress in the knowledge, service, and love of God, the Living One, the Universal Father.

The revelation of God is now complete. All is learnt and said that can be learnt and said. Philosophy may, indeed, "darken counsel with words without knowledge," but never will it get beyond the point where the one living and true God shines forth as the "Father of all." Yet illustrations of his disposition to man may be valuable, and such are supplied by the Bible.

vi. Moreover, *God bears witness of himself in the general tenor of Scripture.* In one sense the whole Bible (speaking in general terms) is testimony borne of God by God himself. As such it is of special value, not only in proclaiming God to the world, and in keeping the idea of God in deep and earnest vitality in the heart of civilisation, but also in withstanding the influence on the one side of a materialistic and a pantheistic philosophy, to petrify or to evaporate the idea, and on the other of an intellectual and controversial theology, to distort and perplex the idea. So long as the Scripture continues to exercise its native power, atheism, pantheism, intellectualism, and speculatism will have difficulty to sustain themselves in Christendom. Not only is there in every part of the Bible a clear and emphatic, albeit for the most part, tacit and indirect assertion of God's existence and sovereignty, but, so to say, God in its pages appears so constantly, and in features and forms so marked and so striking, on the stage of our

hourly, our private, our public life,—he so mingles with our many intercourses and pursuits,—he so pursues us into our acts, yea, into our own individual hearts, that, whatever our relations, we cannot avoid recognising and feeling his presence, while often we are bowed down under his mighty hand, to be lifted up, it may be, by his arm of mercy, or rescued from sin or captivity by his arm of power.

By this constant and authoritative influence, the Bible practically settles a question of no small consequence, which the schools have raised but cannot answer. Is God personal or impersonal? The word "Yes" or "No" is open to objection. Taken in the larger sense of the term "No" is less offensive than "Yes," for to use with us a person always denotes the gross organism of bodily structure, no less than the fine and delicate texture of intellect, heart, and spirit. Yet something of this sort is what the Bible constantly presents to the eye and heart of its readers. For instance, God is ever speaking in the Scripture, and he who speaks is a person. Yet, alongside of this materialistic veil, there is constantly a clear and unmistakable spirituality, which qualifies, does not efface, the hard lines, and softens down, if it does not etherealise, the gross substance of the former, producing a new something, which, while quite spiritual, retains a surface of material form and reality. The latter answers for the personality of God; the former asserts his impersonality. And while the material element largely predominates, it quietly leads the student into his own spirit, as at once the secret place of God and the true exponent of his nature. There, communing with himself, he learns how he, a person, is so essentially in virtue of his

That will and that spirit, of all mortal things the most noble, yet the most mighty, express themselves and exercise their power through an organism in part visible, in part invisible. Drop the organism as a condition of earthly and mortal existence, and find yourself, in your analysis, in presence of spirit and will, or spiritual will, as the essence alike of personality and of God.

The witness which God bears to himself in Scripture relates not merely to the enigmas of metaphysics, but, what is far more important, the moral questions of God's position toward man and man's position toward God. The full exhibition of the answer is found only in the Bible itself. Yet its first pages are in a foretaste of the whole:—

I. GOD BLESSES THE HUMAN RACE.

And God blessed them. and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the earth: and behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, and every tree; the fruit of which they shall be for food. And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good."—Gen. i., 28 seq.

2. GOD GIVES HOPE IN DESPONDENCY.

"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."—Gen. iii. 14 seq.

3. GOD SHOWS CONSIDERATION FOR HUMAN WEAKNESS.

"My spirit shall not be always judging man, for he is flesh, and his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."—Gen. vi., 3.

4. GOD EXERCISES MERCY IN JUDGMENT.

"I set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."—Gen. ix., 8 seq.

5. GOD PEOPLES THE WIDE SPACES OF THE EARTH.

"Jehovah scattered the sons of men abroad upon the face of all the earth."—Gen. xi.

6. GOD SENDS OUT THE FIRST EMIGRANT AND APOSTLE.

"Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy (idolatrous) kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will shew thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing."—Gen. xii.

7. GOD PROVIDES THE EMIGRANT WITH A HOME.

"Jehovah said unto Abram: Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest (Canaan) to thee I give it, and to thy seed for ever."—Gen. xiii., 14 seq.

8. GOD MAKES A COVENANT WITH THE EMIGRANT.

"And Abram was very rich in cattle, and in silver, and in gold (Gen. xiii., 2). And when Abram was ninety and nine years old, Jehovah appeared to him and said: I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect. Henceforth thou shalt be called Abraham, for a father of many nations do I make thee; and I will make thee exceeding fruitful; and I establish my covenant between thee and me, and thy seed after thee, to be God unto thee and thy seed."—Gen. xvii.

9. GOD REWARDS THE EMIGRANT ON ACCOUNT OF HIS DOMESTIC VIRTUES.

"Jehovah said: Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the ends of the earth shall be blessed in him; for I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they will keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment."—Gen. xviii.

10. GOD WITHHOLDS HIS RETRIBUTORY HAND ON ACCOUNT OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"Abraham drew near and said to Jehovah: Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? And Jehovah said: I will not destroy the city (Sodom) if ten righteous men are found there."—Gen. xviii., 20 seq.

11. GOD SUCCOURS THE ABANDONED AND NEEDY.

"Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael, her child, away. She departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water she had was spent, and she laid the child under one of the shrubs; and she went and sat down over against him a good way off; for she said, Let me not see the death of the

d, and she wept. And God heard the voice of the lad, and said to Hagar, **r** not; arise, lift up the lad and hold him in thine hand, for I will make a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink; and was with the lad, and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness and became richer."—Gen. xxi.

**GOD MAKES A WAY OF ESCAPE FOR THOSE WHOM SURRENDER
TO DUTY LEADS INTO STRAITS.**

And God said to Abraham, Lay not thy hand on the lad, for now I know thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son c, whom thou lovest, from me."—Gen. xxii.

13. GOD CONSOLES AND ASSISTS THE FALSELY ACCUSED.

Jehovah was with Joseph (in prison), and showed him mercy and gave favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison; and the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison did not to any thing that was under Joseph's hand, for Jehovah was with , and that which he did Jehovah made it to prosper."—Gen. xl.

14. GOD EDUCES GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

And Joseph said to his brethren: Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life; He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and a ruler throughout all the land Egypt. And ye shall dwell in the land of Geshen, and there I will nourish ; and ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and ye shall haste bring my father down, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land. Gen. xlv. t as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to ng to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."—Gen. i.

The substance of the description of God here given will appear I simply put together, in succession, the several headings, is—

1. God blesses the human race.
 2. God gives hope in despondency.
 3. God shows consideration for human weakness.
 4. God exercises mercy in judgment.
 5. God peoples the wide spaces of the earth.
 6. God sends out the first emigrant and apostle.
 7. God provides the emigrant with a home.
 8. God makes a covenant with the emigrant.
 9. God rewards the emigrant on account of his domestic virtues.
 10. God withholds his retributory hand on account of the he ghteous.
 11. God succours the abandoned and needy.
 12. God makes a way of escape for those whom surrender to duty leads into straits.
 13. God consoles and assists the falsely accused.
 14. God educes good out of evil.
- To human beings in their primæval condition God is here presented as revealing himself under the features involved in

the foregoing statements. Let it be observed that the revelatic is no abstract thing ; has no scholastic form, stops at no metaphysical theorem. It is the revelation of God in Providence. The phrase is one of those hybrids of speech which denote the two sources whence our popular religion has come : Hebrewism and Paganism. To the former we owe the term God, to the latter the term Providence. The distinction implied in the union of the two is unknown to the Bible ; for there God is, from first to last, Providence, and Providence is God. Even in the account of creation God acts not so much for his own glory as for man's good. This is the patriarchal idea of God, this is the patriarchal religion. It is as wondrously beautiful as true. The character drawn of God is of the highest and the purest moral excellence. Moreover, the features are as touching and as durable as they are fine, for they appear not in cold deductions but in living instances. Then, how free from mythological reveries, how free from imaginative speculations. Ethical all over, they satisfy, instruct, elevate head and heart at once. The incidents are equally specific, nay, peculiar. No other archives, whether of the east, the west, the north, or the south, present anything worthy to be placed even at a distance, as compared with these exquisite traits of the Divine. Of immeasurable service would the Bible be to man even were its first book also its last. Such is the light of revelation.

That features less Godlike are found in Genesis is a simple fact. The purely divine has no existence in objects which man's hands have touched. Not universal infallibility, but God's own reality, which ever, where man is concerned, appears under a veil of human infirmity, is what I seek and find in Scripture, and find it, as I do in every part, I rejoice greatly, yea, and will rejoice. Yet while humanity in some of its darker aspects is seen in Genesis side by side with the effulgence of divine perfection, and sometimes throws a shade over it, nevertheless you there behold men, women, and children in colours which are bright, instructive and engaging. What a fine, noble, and deeply religious personage is Abraham ! What a lovely young mother is Hagar ! Never even yet has the brotherly character been more exactly and impressively portrayed than in Joseph. Nor must I omit to declare that, when all these elements are put together and blended into one, they offer a view of God and his Providence which it is a comfort and a joy to contemplate.

VII. *God bears witness of himself in the ancient Hebrew prophecies.* The title prophet, I must premise, is liable to mislead. A word of Pagan origin, it is of necessity a poor representative of a function more purely religious than any known to Paganism. If taken according to its etymology, the term marks out the prophet as the foreteller, but the Hebrew prophet was a foreteller in the sense that moral consequences are foreseen, even as they are involved, in their causes, to enunciate which is to enunciate

whatever they contain. Foretelling in the sense of prediction, that is, the announcement of external and physical events as to take place at a fixed or unfixed point of time in the future, is not the specific function of the Hebrew prophets, and could never be practised by them, except so far as the proclamation of great moral principles is the proclamation of their inevitable issues in every form of human life, whether individual, social or political. In order, then, to preclude mistakes arising from prevalent falsities of heathen origin, let it be emphatically stated as a preliminary that the only true prophets, namely the Hebrew, were the great moral and religious teachers of Israel.

A more strictly specific class of public officers is not to be found, nor one more purely spiritual, in all history. With the exception of Jesus, there is nothing in the Bible which is so distinctive a manifestation of God as the Hebrew prophets. The Mosaic priesthood was a remnant of a primitive and uncultured age, when external authority, a visible ritual, and traditional usages were needful in religion. The judge, though not without some divine sanction, was a military leader and a political administrator, who, called forth by circumstances, changed as they changed. But the prophets were God's expressly chosen, sent and inspired messengers and representatives. As such, they offered a broad contrast with the soothsayers and augurs of Paganism, who, cut off from all immediate and direct communion with God, spent their energy and employed their skill in discovering and interpreting signs and tokens of the divine will in the flight of birds, the colour of entrails, the appetite of chicken, and other imaginary indications. These falsities had no connexion with Hebrew prophecy, as is indeed expressly declared by Balaam in a passage mistranslated in the common version, but which should stand in English thus: "There is no sign seeking in Israel, nor soothsaying in Jacob, the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." (Numb. xxiii., 21.) Hence the certainty of the prophetic word. It was not so much the prophet as God himself that spake, and in the words of Balaam:—

"God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath He said it, and will He not do it? or hath He spoken, and will He not make it good? Behold, I have received instructions to bless, and He hath blessed, and I can not reverse it."—Numb. xxiii., 18 seq.

Accordingly, while yet in the wilderness, the sons of Israel were expressly forbidden, when they had entered Canaan, where they would be surrounded by gross Pagan pretensions, to pry into the unknown and the future;

"To use divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer (of serpents), or a consultor with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for all that do these things are an abomination unto Jehovah;"

While instead of these vanities

"Jehovah, thy God, will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of

thee, of thy brethren (of Hebrew blood), like unto me (Moses), unto whom ye shall hearken; but the prophet that shall presume to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart: How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the things he follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken; but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him. Deut. xviii., comp. Jer. xxviii.

This is the classic passage touching the position and office of the prophets. Clearly they belonged to the order of Moses and Joshua, those leaders in Israel, who united the two great functions of delivering the people and founding the commonwealth. When they originated and established under the eye and finger of God, the prophets continued, and perpetuated with the same divine assistance.

Before I proceed further with illustrations of the prophetic mission, I must emphasise the fact that no other nation possesses a similar order of instructors. The nearest approach is made by the Greek thinker nor the Greek rhetorician, certainly not the Greek or Roman priests, but by the Greek sage. The sage, however, though he had for his office to utter the weighty words and universal maxims of moral truth, had no other sound and reliable source of instruction than his own experience and reflection, whereas the prophet, connected with the deepest and purest religion, was under the teaching and guidance of God himself, the fountain of all moral light and power.

The original designations of the prophet, like all Hebrew names, denote his functions. He is the *Nabi*, that is, one who in virtue of the indwelling spirit of God and his own natural vigour speaks spontaneously, freely, freshly, overpoweringly, as a stream gushes from its overflowing source. In this point of view the prophet was the inspired Hebrew orator. Accordingly, in the joint task which Moses and his brother Aaron were appointed to execute with Pharaoh, the latter acted as spokesman unto the people, as to the former "as a mouth," while Moses, from his superior wisdom was to be "to Aaron instead of God."—Exod. iv., 10 seq.

The requisites, then, for the prophet were a warm and gushing heart and an eloquent tongue, which were filled, refined, and fired by the Divine Spirit. These are the essentials of revelation as denoted in the Bible. These are still the genuine sources of all religious truth. The true Christian minister is not a philosopher that has missed his way and strayed into the Church, nor a dreamer on the heights of some modern Parnassus, nor a learned theologian, deep in Hebrew and Greek roots, or deeper (but no wiser) in worn out philosophies, perpetuated in ecclesiastical formulas; but a "man of God," one whom God has himself kindled with moral and spiritual ardour, whose heart He has filled with truly divine sympathy and commiseration, and whose lip He has touched with a burning coal from the altar of the sanctuary. And

therefore, like true poets, Christian ministers are born, not made, even as the Hebrew prophets were selected out of Israel by God's infallible instinct, and, being so called, were, after due providential training, chosen, inspired, and sent. Accordingly, they belonged to no order whatever, either of family, school, or priesthood, either of noble or regal blood. They were mostly men of the people, taken out (elected) of God specially because of their aptitude for the work—the highest work in Israel, the highest in any nation—namely, to turn men one to another in equity and practical beneficence, and, for that purpose, to turn men to God in childlike and reverent obedience. Nor are we to conceive of the aptitude as something passive or merely natural. The natural gift was quickened or awakened (so the original for "raised up" signifies) by God's spirit working in the family, in society, in the secrecy of the individual heart (Amos iii., 7), conjointly and step by step with the individual efforts of the prophetic novice. There was, however, one source of instruction, divine indeed in its origin, but earthly in its dwelling-place and form. This was the Decalogue. That moral code was the true and only rule of God's kingdom upon earth, and while the priest had to see that the daily sacrifices were duly offered, the prophet was charged with the far higher duty of studying and interpreting the law so as to adapt its spirit and power to the ever newly-rising wants of society, so that the eternal prescriptions of right and wrong, as between man and man, and as between man and God, might be duly observed on the part not only of individuals but also of priests and rulers. Thus the general economy of the national life lay under the supervision and care of the prophets, who, in consequence, were the supreme power in Church and State. Such still is the function of Christian ministers. Would that they understood the nature and felt the grandeur of their work, thus to stand between the living God and dead or dying men, bearers of succour and renewal from the former to the latter. The day of this light will come, and then they will cease to toy with the State, whose supervisors they are, and in no wise the servants, and preserving at all cost their personal independence, will speak with that true prophetic authority which in Christ called forth words of wondering admiration. (Luke iv., 22.) Till then they will continue to speak, as the scribes and pharisees, in set and polished phrase it may be, but in tones alike artificial and powerless. Through such God bears no witness of himself, but only through the prophetic souls of the true Church of Christ, whose fellowship is with the Father and the Son."—1 John i., 3.

While, however, the fulfilment of the law was the general rule of the prophet's mission, he was bound by no iron and inelastic bond, but was left in the ever changing conditions of society to the monitions and guidance of his own spirit, informed and guided by the spirit of Jehovah in virtue of inmost communion. Hence

alone arose such a heart as would make its possessor "fear God and keep his commandments always," so that it might be well with him and his children. (Deut. v., 29.) "And the spirit of Jehovah will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy and shall be turned into another man." (1 Sam. x., 6.) Thus the gift of prophecy in Israel was a preparation for the new creation of the Christian church, and the latter is but the fulfilment and completion of the former. In both God bears witness of himself by "signs and wonders" truly divine, because transcendently beneficial, as well as super-eminently needful.

He who is guided by God's written law and his indwelling spirit becomes morally pure and great. In other words, he lives by faith. So living, he has clear and vivid perceptions of things "invisible or dimly seen" by others. This speciality caused the prophet to be called also a seer, or "the seer" (1 Sam. ix., 9, 11; 2 Sam. xv., 27). The fact supplies another illustration of the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The seer, whose function it was to see God, was best able to make God known, and, in consequence, through him God could least ineffectually bear witness of himself. Among the seers of the Old Testament mention is made of one named Asaph, who was a poet and a teacher of poets. (1 Chron. xvi., 7.) Here we have the form which prophecy took brought under our notice. In part the form was prosaic, otherwise the name could not have been given to Samuel and others, who either made or wrote history. But the form of poetry was far more common, and the sacred song produced under divine as well as human influence was sung with musical accompaniments, sometimes of a high order. The musical institution of David seems to have comprised 4,000 singers, under 228 leaders, distributed into 24 classes, which in their turn, week by week, performed the ordinary religious service. If this is to be understood literally, the magnificence of the temple worship was something extraordinary. Nor would the implied skill and efficiency have come into existence except as a result of able and constant training. The task was performed by the "schools of the prophets," which Samuel instituted, in which not improbably the art of literary composition, as well as of singing and instrumental music, was systematically taught. (1 Sam. x., 18, seq.) These were studied as aids to the expression of piety, sentiment, and with a view to moral development and strengthening. The religious aim predominated. Art was a serving maid to religion in Israel, not its mistress, or at least its equal, as in Greece. Thus the ethical character of religion was preserved instead of being sacrificed to the æsthetical, as generally in Paganism, a public worship equally as the worship of the home, the synagogue, and the rural oratory, being under the spirit of God, became each a witness for God. (Acts xvi., 1, 13.) In this view Hebrew life on its brighter side reflected the Divine Spirit by which it was

animated. Alas! there was another side: whence God was banished, and where "the prince of the world" bore sway.

What has just been said seems to indicate that the prophetic element in Israel was not without some tinge of what may be termed a professional character. Not that the schools of the prophets were colleges or universities in the modern sense of the words, or that their course of instruction included polite literature and scientific discipline. Such opportunities of learning were unknown in the earlier ages of culture; equally were they alien to the Hebrew genius and character. But if only music and song were taught, a profession would be formed, and the professional influence is adverse to the spontaneousness, originality, and power which characterise an Isaiah. The truth probably is that only the later Hebrew muse was an artificial product, a product with which man's skill had more to do than God's spirit. As, however, the human threw deep and deeper shadows on the divine, so God's voice of witness to himself grew fainter and less frequent. What was true in Israel is true now, and I fear that, judged by this criterion, the present age is one of religious decline. None the less do I hold firm to my faith in the indestructibility of the essence of Christianity. The words of the prophet, "Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and yet it is night" (Is. xxi., 11) offer not an unapt description of our actual religious condition. It is night; nevertheless there is a glimmer of dawn, and if that dawn is to brighten into perfect day, it will be in virtue of God's bearing witness to his truth in some prophetic souls who, under Christ, will, in their measure, become severally "a burning and a shining light."

Of the personal history of the Hebrew prophets little is known. Their several productions for the most part bear certain names, but names are valuable only as denoting things, and as the names of the prophets lead us into no circles of biographical facts, they are of little value. Of Isaiah himself, the prince of the prophets, almost nothing is known, and probably the latter part of the book which bears the name was written, not by Isaiah, but by some unknown poet or poets. Practically the prophetic literature of the Hebrews is anonymous. Yet its value has been and ever remains immeasurable. Let not the student then attach undue importance to names. Moral and religious truth is like the sun, or the dew, or domestic love, self-attesting to the remotest as to the earliest generations. Scarcely of inferior importance is the testimony borne by the absence of historical particulars in this matter, to the disinterestedness of the individuals and the simplicity and spontaneousness of the national sentiment to which we owe the preservation of these precious productions. Unselfish on one side and unsuspicious on the other, the poets and their preservers simply wrote because they must write, and transmit because they feel the treasure is too great to be lost. These are

the genuine qualities of an original and primitive age, prolific fine thoughts and simple and natural deeds. Criticism was then born to question the latter or to damp the former. Moses spoke when inspired, wrote when it was necessary for their purpose, and preserved what they wrote because they valued and loved it. What higher, what more reliable testimony of the worth of the products could we need? Yet a higher and even a more reliable one do we still possess, even since, having those words and having human hearts—hearts not wholly without God—we are able to feel and estimate these moral and spiritual values for ourselves, and may, with due care, know of a certainty that they are of God. In other words, we have an ear to hear, a heart to feel, a head to understand, and a will to accept the witness which God still bears of himself in Hebrew documents now from two to three thousand years old.

Knowing little of the course of the personal history of the Hebrew prophets, we know little of the circumstances that occasioned or accompanied their call and consecration in each case. Only this we may safely say, that in a mission and work so purely moral and spiritual—moral and spiritual must the qualification have chiefly been; and as the qualification, so its recognition, whether on the part of God or man. One recorded instance justifies the presumption. The call and the consecration of Isaiah are recorded by the prophet himself, and with particulars as to time and imagery which add to their interest no less than their value.

THE CALL AND CONSECRATION OF ISAIAH.

"In the year that king Uzziah died (757 A. C.) I saw Jehovah sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. And one cried unto another and said:

Holy! Holy! Holy! is Jehovah of Hosts;

The whole earth is full of His glory.

And the foundations of the thresholds were shaken at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then I said, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amidst a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, Jehovah of Hosts. Then he took one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.

And I heard the voice of Jehovah saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

Then I said: Here am I, send me.

And he said:

Go, and tell this people,
Hear indeed, but understand not;
And see indeed, but perceive not.
Make the heart of this people fat,
And make their ears dull, and blind their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,

And understand with their heart, and return and be healed.
 Then I said, Lord, how long? And he answered :
 Until the cities be laid waste, and without inhabitant,
 And the houses without man,
 And the land be utterly desolate ;
 And until Jehovah hath removed men far away,
 And there be great desolation in the midst of the land.
 And if there be still in it a tenth, it shall again be destroyed.
 But like a terebinth and an oak,
 Of which a trunk remains when they are cut down,
 So a holy seed shall be its trunk."

The general import of this commission is : Go and preach repentance to this wicked and insensible people ; and thy preaching will follow up by my providential chastisements, until a remnant is won from moral ruin and death. That remnant is the true Israel, the Israel of God.

Here, then, is the witness which God gives of himself in the Hebrew prophets : he declares the supremacy of duty, the sovereignty of his own will, the necessity of such a change of heart as leads the rebellious back to himself, and the efficacy of righteous efforts for the attainment of these great results ;—to be secured at least so far as a remnant of the sinful is concerned. The witness, then, is in substance a proclamation on divine authority of a moral order in the world of which God himself is the source and the support, and the prophet God's instrument and mouth-piece to his brethren of the human race.

This grand and most pregnant revelation made of God to man through the Hebrew prophets, is the golden thread which runs through the entire texture of their recorded utterances. To illustrate the fact would be a long, though a most instructive, task. I confine myself to one instance. Let Isaiah utter the word which God still speaks to man under his name. In producing the testimony I shall, with a few corrections of the text, confine my hand to transcription and arrangement, so as to present an orderly view of God and God's providence as witnessed by God himself through his servant the prophet.

Before I bring forwards the testimony in detail, I must say a word or two respecting the preparation the divine herald underwent for his all-important office. As the duty to be discharged for religious, equally religious was the preparation. Of Isaiah's prior education we know nothing, except that, being a Hebrew, he had passed through a religious training to which his nature was well disposed, and from which he would not fail to have received deep and vivid spiritual impressions. That such was his condition is implied in his possessing an ear to hear and a heart to accept God's invitation. But that condition could have been only in progress when he saw the vision in the temple, by its awful solemnity, drew from him the confession—
 'Is me ! I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips ; for mine eyes have seen the king, Jehovah

of Hosts." That sight it was that showed him his own uncleanness, by showing him the majestic purity of God. A similar experience has been undergone by all other distinguished religionists, save one. We have no evidence to show that Jesus was touched with a sense of sin before he consecrated his life to the proclamation of the Gospel. Nor can any, the faintest, trace of sin be detected in his consciousness at any time. With ordinary men, however, there is no true service of God, either in private or in public, until, by contemplating the holiness of the All-Perfect God, they learn to feel how impure their own hearts and lives are. With mortals all real moral excellence has for its source that true humility, poignant contrition, and lofty aspiration which ensue from a realisation on the part of the individual of the lustre and splendour of the divine holiness.

Moreover, in this personal abasement, and the personal elevation of which it is the occasion, lies the reliableness of the witness supplied by privileged persons bear of God and God's dealings with man. Wise in the spiritual life themselves, they are wise and safe guides to others in that great concern. Who can teach mathematics to the mathematician? Whom, when sick, do you consider trustworthy but the physician of good education and long and varied practice? Why is a father's advice better than the crudities of a son's desires? Because he is skilful in the art of living virtuously. "As every man," says the Apostle Peter (1 Epist. iv., 10), "has received the gift, so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The prophets were, and still remain, next to the great physician, the pattern spiritual healers of our race, and that they are because they suffered from the wounds, bruises, and disorders from which all men suffer, and under which so many pine away and die. Indeed, the disease of sin is universal. A universal malady asks for a universal remedy. Whence but from the universal Spirit can so great a boon proceed? And if the disorder is incident to all, philosophers do not escape from the common lot, whatever their knowledge, whatever their intellectual culture, whatever their logical skill, whatever their success or failure may attend their endeavours to reason out God from the universe or from their own intellects,—all this ability, and all this science, fall short of man's greatest need, namely, how to live so as to live a sinless or, at any rate, a morally spotless and humanly perfect life. And here I must in honesty add that the moral qualities which exclusive addiction to head-culture occasions, generally obstruct rather than promote superior ethical and spiritual excellence.

No; not to the reasoners, not to the disputers, not to the critics of this world, important as in some respects their function are, must you repair if you desire "to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." (1 Tim. ii., 2.) For its own specific purposes, that is for the purification, unfolding, and

element of man's natural capabilities, this or that utterance of Christ or of Isaiah is incomparably of greater value than all deductions of a materialistic experience, and all the deductions of positivist philosophy. Not in the latter, but in the former God bear witness of his universal presence, and his ceaseless and all as beneficent sovereignty. The following view of the "length" he entrusted to his servant Isaiah amply attests the truth of this avowal:—

THE TESTIMONY TO GOD, AND GOD'S DEALINGS WITH MEN.

THE ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD, THE CREATOR AND RULER OF ALL.

“Thus saith Jehovah :
I am the first, and I am the last,
And beside me there is no God.
I am Jehovah, who made all things ;
Who stretched forth the heaven alone ;
Who spread abroad the earth by myself ;
Who frustrateth the signs of deceivers ;
Who establisheth the word of his servants,
And performeth the counsel of his messengers ;
Who saith of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited,—
And of the cities of Judah, They shall be rebuilt.
I am Jehovah, and there is none else ;
I form the light and create darkness ;
I make peace and create evil ;
I, Jehovah, do all these things.
Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
And let the skies pour down deliverance ;
Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation,
And let deliverance spring up together ;
I, Jehovah, have effected it.
Turn unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”

2. GOD IS SUPREME.

“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
And meted out the heavens with a span,
And comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure,
And weighed the mountains in scales,
And the hills in a balance ?
Who hath directed the spirit of Jehovah,
Or, being his counsellor, hath taught him ?
Behold, the nations to him are as a drop of the bucket,
And are accounted as the dust of the balance.
Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing ;
Even Lebanon is not sufficient for firewood,
Nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.
All nations before him are as nothing ;
They are accounted by him as nothingness and vanity.”

3. GOD IS INCOMPARABLE.

To whom will ye liken God,
Or what likeness will ye compare unto him ?
The workman melteth a graven image,

And the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold,
 And casteth silver chains.
 He that hath only a poor oblation,
 Chooseth a tree that will not rot ;
 He seeketh unto him a cunning workman,
 To prepare a graven image that shall not be moved.
 Have ye not known ? have ye not heard ?
 Hath it not been told you from the beginning ?
 Have ye not understood the foundations of the earth ?
 He is God, He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth,
 And the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers,
 That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain,
 And spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in,—
 That bringeth princes to nothing,—
 That maketh the judges of the earth as vanity,—
 Yea, hardly are they planted, hardly are they sown,
 Hardly hath their stock taken root in the earth ;
 When He even bloweth upon them they wither,
 And the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble.
 To whom, then, will ye liken me, or shall I be equal ?
 Saith the Holy One.
 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold ?
 Who hath created these ?
 He who bringeth out their host by number,
 He calleth them all by name,
 By the greatness of his power and his mighty strength not one faileth."

4. GOOD TIDINGS FROM GOD.

"Get thee up upon the high mountains
 O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion !
 Lift up thy voice with strength
 Thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem !
 Lift it up, be not afraid ;
 Say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God !
 Behold the Lord Jehovah will come with might ;
 And his arm shall rule for him :
 Behold, his reward is with him ;
 And the result of his work before him.
 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd ;
 He shall gather the lambs in his arms,
 And carry them in his bosom ;
 He shall gently lead them that have young."

5. GOD THE ONE GOOD SAMARITAN.

"Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel,
 My way is hid from Jehovah,
 And my just cause is passed from before God ?
 Hast thou not known ? hast thou not heard ?
 The everlasting God, Jehovah,
 The creator of the ends of the earth,
 Fainteth not, neither is weary ;
 There is no searching of his understanding.
 He giveth strength to the faint,
 And to them that are feeble he increaseth vigour.
 Though even young men faint and become weary,
 And chosen youths stumble and fall,
 Yet they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength ;
 They shall mount up with wings as eagles ;
 They shall run and not be weary ;
 They shall walk and not faint.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none,
 When their tongue is parched with thirst,
 I, Jehovah, will answer them ;
 The God of Israel will not forsake them.
 I will open rivers on barren heights,
 And fountains in the valleys ;
 I will change the wilderness into a pool of water,
 And wide uplands into springs.
 In the wilderness I will plant the cedar,
 The acacia, and the myrtle, and the olive tree ;
 In the desert I will set the fir tree,
 The plane and the box together ;
 That they may see, know, and consider
 That the hand of Jehovah hath done this.

6. GOD'S LOVE AND PITY TOWARD HIS CHILDREN.

" Thus saith Jehovah who created thee, O Jacob,
 And he that formed thee, O Israel ;
 Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ;
 I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.
 When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee,
 And through the rivers they shall not overwhelm thee ;
 When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned ;
 Neither shall the flame kindle upon thee :
 For I am Jehovah thy God,
 The Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.
 Because thou art precious in my sight
 Thou has been honoured ;
 And I have loved thee,
 And I will give men for thee,
 And people for thy life.
 Fear not, for I am with thee ;
 I will bring thy seed from the east,
 And gather thee from the west ;
 I will say to the north give up,
 And to the south keep not back.
 Bring my sons from afar,
 And my daughters from the end of the earth,
 Every one called by my name,
 Whom I have created for my glory."

7. GOD'S TENDERNESS EXCEEDS THAT OF A MOTHER.

" Sing, O heavens, and exult, O earth ;
 And break forth into singing, O mountains ;
 For Jehovah hath comforted his people,
 And will have mercy upon his afflicted.
 But Zion saith : Jehovah hath forsaken me,
 And the Lord hath forgotten me.
 Can a woman forget her sucking child,
 So as not to have compassion on the son of her womb ?
 These may forget, yet will I not forget thee.
 Lo, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands ;
 Thy walls are continually before me.
 Therefore, the ransomed of Jehovah shall return,
 And come to Zion with songs,
 And everlasting joy upon their head ;
 They shall obtain gladness and joy ;
 Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

3. GOD CHALLENGES HIS CENSORS.

"Produce your cause, saith Jehovah.
 Bring forth your strong reasons, saith the king of Jacob.
 Let them bring forth and declare to us what shall happen ;
 Declare the former things what they were,
 That we may consider them and know their issue,—
 Or let us hear of things to come ;
 Declare the things that are to be hereafter,
 That we may know that ye are gods.
 Yea, do good, or do evil,
 That we may look and see it together.
 Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought :
 He that chooseth you chooseth an abomination.

I am Jehovah, that is my name ;
 And my glory will I not give to another,
 Neither my praise to graven images.
 Behold, the former things are come to pass,
 And new things do I declare ;
 Before they spring forth do I tell you of them."

9. MAN IS FRAIL AND SINFUL.

"A voice said, cry.
 And he said, what shall I cry ?
 All flesh is grass,
 And all the comeliness thereof as the flower of the field :
 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth.
 When the wind of Jehovah bloweth upon it :
 Truly the people is grass.
 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth :
 But the word of our God shall stand for ever."

10. THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE REBUKED.

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth,
 For Jehovah speaketh.
 I have nourished and brought up children,
 And they have rebelled against me.
 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib ;
 Israel doth not know, my people do not consider.
 Ah ! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,
 A seed of evil doers, children that act corruptly,
 They have forsaken Jehovah ;
 They have despised the Holy One of Israel ;
 They have gone backward.
 The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint ;
 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire ;
 Your land, strangers devour it in your presence."

11. GUILTY RULERS REBUKED.

"How is the faithful city become a harlot ?
 It was full of justice ; righteousness lodged in it,
 But now murderers.
 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water ;
 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves ;
 Every one loveth gifts and followeth after rewards ;
 They defend not the fatherless,
 Neither do they take charge of the cause of the widow ;

Therefore, Jehovah doth take away support,—
 All support of bread, and all support of water,—
 From the mighty man and the man of war,
 The judge, and the prophet, and the diviner,
 The elder, the captain, the honourable man, the counsellor,
 The cunning artificer, and the expert enchanter ;
 And He will give youths to be their princes,
 And infants shall rule over them.
 Woe to them that acquit the guilty for a bribe,
 And take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.
 Woe unto them that make unrighteous decrees
 To turn away the needy from judgment,
 And to take away the right of the poor of my people,
 That widows may be their prey,
 And that they may rob the fatherless.
 And what will ye do in the day of visitation,
 And the desolation which shall come from afar ?
 To whom will ye flee for help ?
 And where will ye leave your wealth ?
 Ye shall bow down among prisoners, and fall among the slain.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen,
 To loose the bonds of wickedness,
 To strike off the fastenings of the yoke,
 And to let the oppressed go free ?
 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
 And to bring the outcast poor to thy house ?
 When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him,
 And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ?”

12. MAMMON WORSHIP REBUKED.

“ Their land is full of silver and gold,
 Neither is there an end of their treasures ;
 Their land is also full of horses,
 Neither is there an end of their chariots ;
 Their land is also full of idols ;
 They worship the work of their own hands ;
 Therefore shall the mean man bow down,
 And the great man be humbled :
 Enter into the rocks, and hide in the dust,
 Before the terror of Jehovah,
 And from the glory of his majesty.
 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled,
 And the haughtiness of men shall bow down,
 And Jehovah alone shall be exalted,
 And the idols shall utterly pass away.”

13. FEMALE OSTENTATION REBUKED.

“ Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,
 And walk with uplifted necks and wanton eyes
 Mincing their steps as they go,
 And making a tinkling with their ankle-rings,
 Jehovah will make the crown of their head bald,
 And take away the adornment of their feet,
 And their head dresses and rich crescents,
 Their ear pendants, their bracelets, and their veils,
 Their tiaras, and belts, and scent boxes, and amulets,
 Their rings and their nose jewels,

Their robes, mantles, cloaks, and purses.
 Their mirrors, fine linen, turbans, and shawls ;
 And instead of perfume there shall be rottenness ;
 Instead of girdle, a rope ; and instead of well-dressed hair, baldness ;
 And instead of a festive garment, a wrapping of sackcloth ;
 A brand instead of beauty.
 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy might in battle ;
 Zion's gates shall sigh and mourn,
 And she shall sit desolate upon the ground."

14. THE INTEMPERATE REBUKED.

"Woe unto them that rise early in the morning to follow strong drink,
 Continuing late at night till they are inflamed with wine.
 The harp and the viol, the tabret and the flute are in their feasts ;
 But they regard not the deeds of Jehovah,
 Neither acknowledge the work of his hands.
 Therefore my people become captives for lack of knowledge ;
 And their honourable men are famished,
 And their multitude parched with thirst ;
 Therefore doth the grave enlarge herself,
 And open her mouth without measure,
 And their glory and their tumult descend into it.
 Woe to them that draw down punishment with cords of wickedness,
 And the penalty of sin as if with cart ropes.
 Woe to them that call evil good and good evil,
 That put darkness for light and light for darkness ;
 That put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.
 Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine,
 And men of strength to mingle strong drink."

15. IMPIETY REBUKED.

"Woe unto them that hide their counsel from Jehovah !
 Whose works are in darkness, and who say,
 Who seeth us ? and who knoweth us ?
 Ah ! your perverseness !
 Shall the potter be valued as the clay ?
 That the work should say of him that made it,
 He made me not :
 Or the thing framed say of him that framed it,
 He hath no understanding !"

16. THE GREAT ALTERNATIVE.

"Come, now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah :
 Though your sins be as scarlet,
 They shall be as white as snow ;
 Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
 If ye be willing and obedient,
 Ye shall eat the good of the land ;
 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be eaten by the sword."

17. DIVINE CHASTISEMENTS REMEDIAL.

"I will turn my hand against thee,
 And thoroughly purge away thy dross,
 And take away all thine alloy.
 And I will restore thy judges as at the first,
 And thy councillors as at the beginning."

Afterwards thou shalt be called
The city of righteousness, a faithful city.
Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
And her converts by righteousness."

18. TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

"Hear the word of Jehovah, ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?
I am sated with the burnt offerings of rams.
Bring no more vain oblations.
Wash you, make you clean;
Put away the evil of your doings from mine eyes;
Cease to do evil, learn to do well;
Seek justice, right the oppressed;
Defend the fatherless, plead for the widow."

19. COMFORT IN PARDON.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,
Saith your God;
Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
That her warfare is accomplished,
That her iniquity is pardoned,
That she hath received from Jehovah's hand
Double for all her sins."

20. THE SAFETY AND HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"Who among us shall abide in devouring fire?
Who among us shall abide in everlasting burnings?
He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly,
He that refuseth the gain of oppressions,
That shaketh his hands from taking a bribe,
That stoppeth his ears not to hear of blood,
And shutteth his eyes not to look on evil,
He shall dwell on high.
The rock summits shall be his refuge,
His bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure.
The wilderness and the parched ground shall be glad for them,
And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;
It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,
Even with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it,
The excellency of Carmel and Sharon;
These shall see the glory of Jehovah,
The excellency of our God.
Strengthen ye the weak hands,
And make firm the feeble knees;
Say to them that are of a fearful heart,
Be strong, fear not; behold your God!
He himself will come and save you.
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped;
Then shall the lame leap as a hart,
And the tongue of the dumb shall sing;
For in the wilderness shall waters break out,
And torrents in the desert."

And the glowing sand shall become a pool,
 And the thirsty soil springs of water ;
 The haunt of jackals, where each lay,
 Shall be a place for reeds and rushes.
 And a highway shall be there, and a way,
 And it shall be called the way of holiness.
 The unclean shall not pass over it,
 But wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.
 No lion shall be there,
 Nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon.
 It shall not be found there,
 But the redeemed shall walk there ;
 And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return,
 And come to Zion with songs,
 And everlasting joy upon their heads ;
 They shall obtain gladness and joy,
 And sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

21. EXULTATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"In that day thou shalt say,
 I will praise thee, O Jehovah !
 Though thou wast angry with me,
 Thy anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.
 Behold, God is my salvation ;
 I will trust and not be afraid ;
 Jehovah is my strength and my song,
 And He will be my salvation.
 Draw water out of wells of salvation,
 Praise Jehovah, call upon his name,
 Make known his deeds among the peoples,
 Proclaim that his name is exalted :
 Sing unto Jehovah.
 For He hath done excellent things :
 Let this be known in all the earth.
 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion,
 For great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel."

22. A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS.

"A voice crieth :
 In the wilderness prepare ye the way of Jehovah ;
 Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
 Every valley shall be exalted,
 And every mountain and hill shall be made low,
 And the crooked shall become straight,
 And the rough places plain,
 And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed,
 And all flesh shall see it together,
 For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it."

23. GOD'S INVITATION AND GRACIOUS PROMISE.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth,
 Come to the waters ;
 And he that hath no money,
 Come buy wine and milk,
 Without money and without price.
 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread,

And your labour for that which satisfieth not?
 Hearken diligently unto me, and eat what is good,
 And let your soul delight itself in fatness.
 Seek Jehovah while He may be found,
 Call upon him while He is near;
 Let the wicked forsake his way,
 And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
 And let him return unto Jehovah,
 And He will have mercy upon him;
 And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

24. GOD'S SERVANT DESCRIBED.

"Behold my servant whom I uphold,
 My chosen one in whom my soul delighteth:
 I have put my Spirit upon him,
 He shall publish right among the nations.
 He shall not cry, nor lift up his voice,
 Nor cause it to be heard in the street;
 A bruised reed shall he not break,
 Nor quench the feebly burning flax.
 He shall not grow feeble nor be discouraged,
 Till he hath established right in the earth,
 And the isles shall wait for his law.

Thus saith God, Jehovah,
 He that created the heavens and stretched them out;
 He that spread forth the earth,
 And that which cometh out of it;
 He that giveth breath unto the people upon it,
 And life to them that walk therein;
 I, Jehovah, have called thee for deliverance,
 And will hold thy hand, and will keep thee,
 And give thee to be a covenant to the people,
 A light of the nations,
 To open the blind eyes,
 To bring forth the captives from the prison,
 Them that sit in darkness out of the dungeon.

Surely he hath our griefs and carried our sorrows.
 And we did esteem him stricken
 Smitten of God and afflicted.
 But he was wounded for our transgressions,
 Bruised for our iniquities;
 The chastisement of our peace was upon him;
 And with his stripes we are healed.
 Therefore will I give him a portion with the great,
 And he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
 Because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

25. THE DELIVERER.

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
 And the government shall be upon his shoulder;
 And his name shall be Wonder, Counsellor,
 Mighty Hero, Enduring Father, Prince of Peace;
 To the increase of his government there shall be no end,
 Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom;

To order and to establish it,
By justice and by righteousness,
From henceforth and for ever ;
The zeal of Jehovah shall accomplish this.

There shall come forth a shoot out of the stem of Jesse,
And a branch shall grow out of his roots.
And the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and reverence for Jehovah.
He shall not judge by the sight of his eyes,
Neither decide by the hearing of his ears ;
But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the afflicted of the earth ;
He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked ;
And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

The spirit of Jehovah is upon me,
For Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the afflicted,
He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to them that are bound ;
To proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah,
And the day of retribution of our God ;
To comfort all that mourn,
To give unto them a chaplet instead of ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning ;
The garment of praise for a spirit of despondency,
That they may be called perfect trees,
The planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified,
Everlasting joy shall be theirs."

26. GREETING TO GOD'S HERALD.

"How beautiful, upon the mountains,
Are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
That publisheth peace !
That bringeth good tidings of good,
That publisheth salvation,
That saith unto Zion,
Thy God reigneth !
The voice of thy watchmen !
Break forth into singing together,
Ye waste places of Jerusalem ;
For Jehovah hath comforted his people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm
In the sight of all the nations ;
And all the ends of the earth
Shall see the salvation of our God."

27. THE FOREIGN OPPRESSOR OVERTHROWN.

"How hath the oppressor ceased,
The gold-exacting city ceased ?
Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked,
The rod of the rulers,

Which smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke,
Which ruled the nations in anger
With unrestrained oppression.

The whole earth is at rest and is quiet ;
They break forth into singing,
Yea, the fir trees rejoice over thee,
The Cedars of Lebanon, saying,

Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

The lower world is moved for thee,
To meet thee at thy coming ;
It stirreth up its dead for thee,
All the chief ones of the earth ;
It raiseth from their thrones the kings of the nations ;
They all speak, and say unto thee :

Art thou also become weak as we ?
Art thou become like unto us ?
Thy pomp is brought down to the grave,
And the noise of thy viols.
The worm is spread under thee,
And worms cover thee.
How art thou fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning ?
How art thou cut down to the earth,
Thou that didst overthrow nations ?

Yet thou hadst said in thy heart,
I will ascend the heavens ;
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God,
And sit upon the mount of assembly,
In the extremities of the north ;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds ;
I will be like the Most High.
But thou shalt be brought down to the lower world,
To the depth of the pit.

They that see thee shall gaze at thee ;
They shall consider thee, saying,
Is this the man that made the earth tremble,
That did shake kingdoms ;
That made the world a wilderness,
And destroyed its cities ;
That released not his prisoners ?
All the kings of the nations, all of them
Lie in honour, each in his own sepulchre ;
But thou art cast out of thy tomb,
Like an abominable branch,
Covered with the slain,
That are thrust through with the sword ;
That go down to the stones of the pit,
Like a carcase trodden under foot.
Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial,
Because thou didst waste thy land,
And slay thy people.

The seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.
Prepare slaughter for his children,
For the iniquity of their fathers,
That they do not rise, nor possess the land,
Nor fill the face of the world with cities.

Thus will I rise up against them, saith Jehovah,
 And cut off from Babylon name and remnant,
 And son and grandson.
 I will also make it a possession for the bittern,
 And pools of water ;
 And I will sweep it away with the besom of destruction,
 Saith Jehovah."

28. A KING REIGNING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness,
 And princes shall rule with justice ;
 And they shall each be
 As a hiding place from the wind,
 And a covert from the tempest ;
 As channels of water in a dry place ;
 As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.
 The eyes of them that see shall not be dim,
 And the ears of them that hear shall understand ;
 The heart even of the rash shall gain knowledge,
 And the tongue of stammerers speak plainly.
 No more shall the fool be called noble,
 Nor the fraudulent be termed generous.
 The noble deviseth noble things,
 And by noble things shall he stand.
 Then justice shall dwell in the wilderness,
 And righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
 And the work of righteousness shall be peace,
 And the effect of righteousness, quiet and trust for ever.
 And my people shall dwell in a peaceful abode,
 And in secure dwellings, and in tranquil resting places.
 Blessed are ye that sow on all waters,
 That send forth the feet of the ox and the ass."

29. BENIGN CONSEQUENCES OF THE SWAY OF JEHOVAH.

"Jehovah shall judge among the nations,
 And decide for many peoples ;
 And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
 And their spears into pruning hooks ;
 Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
 Neither shall they learn war any more.
 Then the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
 And the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
 And the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together ;
 And a little child shall lead them.
 And the cow and the bear shall feed side by side,
 And their young shall lie down together ;
 And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
 The sucking child also shall play on the hole of the asp,
 And the weaned child shall put his hand on the vipers' den ;
 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,
 For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah
 As the waters cover the sea.

To this man will I look,
 To him that is humble and of a contrite spirit,
 And that trembleth at my word.
 I will make a man more precious than fine gold ;
 Even a man, than the gold of Ophir.

For, behold ! I create new heavens and a new earth ;
 I make Jerusalem an exultation,
 And her people a joy."

30. THE IN-GATHERING OF THE RIGHTEOUS FROM ALL PARTS.

"Jehovah will lift up an ensign to the nations afar,
 And will call to them from the ends of the earth,
 And lo ! with speed, eagerly shall they come.
 None shall be weary nor stumble among them ;
 None shall slumber nor sleep ;
 Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed,
 Nor the latchet of their sandals be undone.

The time is come for gathering all nations and tongues,
 And they shall come and see my glory ;
 All flesh shall come and worship before me, saith Jehovah."

31. THE UNIVERSAL BANQUET.

"In this mountain shall Jehovah make unto all peoples
 A feast of fat things,
 A feast of old wines,
 Of fat things full of marrow,
 Of old wines well refined.
 And he will destroy in this mountain the covering
 Which covereth all peoples,
 And the veil that is spread over all nations.
 He will swallow up death for ever,
 And will wipe tears from all faces ;
 And the reproach of his people he will take away,
 And in that day it shall be said
 Lo, this is our God ;
 We have waited for him, and he will save us ;
 This is Jehovah, we have waited for him ;
 We will exult and rejoice in his salvation."

32. ISRAEL THE RELIGIOUS TEACHER OF THE WORLD.

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days
 That the mountain of the house of Jehovah
 Shall be established above the mountains,
 And shall be higher than the hills ;
 And all nations shall flow unto it.
 And many peoples shall come and say,
 Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah,
 To the house of the God of Jacob ;
 And he will teach us his ways,
 And we will walk in his paths ;
 For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
 And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

33. THE GLAD ACCEPTANCE OF GOD'S MERCY AND GOODNESS.

"I will commemorate the loving kindness of Jehovah
 According to all that he hath bestowed on us ;
 For he said, surely they are my people,
 Children that will not be false ;
 And he was their Saviour.

In all their adversity he was not adverse,
 And the angel of his presence saved them ;
 In his love and his pity he redeemed them ;
 And he bare them, and carried them all the days of old ;
 And now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father ;
 We are the clay, and thou the potter,
 And we all are the work of thy hand.

I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah,
 My soul shall exult in my God ;
 For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation,
 He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
 As a bridegroom decketh himself with a chaplet,
 And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels,
 For as the garden causeth the seed to spring forth,
 So Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise
 To spring forth before all the nations."

In order to place this testimony in one view under the reader's eye, I put together the headings of the several sections.

1. The one living and true God, the creator and ruler of all.
2. God is supreme.
3. God is incomparable.
4. Good tidings from God.
5. God the one Good Samaritan.
6. God's love and pity towards his children.
7. God's tenderness exceeds that of a mother.
8. God challenges his censors.
9. Man is frail and sinful.
10. The sins of the people rebuked.
11. Guilty rulers rebuked.
12. Mammon worship rebuked.
13. Female ostentation rebuked.
14. The intemperate rebuked.
15. Impiety rebuked.
16. The great alternative
17. Divine chastisement remedial.
18. To obey is better than sacrifice.
19. Comfort in pardon
20. The safety and happiness of the righteous.
21. Exultation of the righteous.
22. A way in the wilderness.
23. God's invitation and gracious promise.
24. God's servant described.
25. The deliverer.
26. Greeting to God's herald.
27. The foreign oppressor overthrown
28. A king reigning in righteousness.
29. Benign consequences of the sway of Jehovah.
30. The ingathering of the righteous from all parts.
31. The universal banquet.
32. Israel the religious teacher of the world.
33. The glad acceptance of God's mercy and goodness.

If any illustration of the tenor of the foregoing summary is desired it may be found in Psalm ciii. The one or the other, now much more the two, may be called "The Gospel of the Old Covenant." Strip off what of Hebrew thought and phraseology lies on the surface and you have "the glad tidings of great joy" which Jesus proclaimed, "the Gospel of the grace of God" which Paul planted in the chief centres of classic civilisation; and the one sole remedy for human ills, the one sole lever for the moral elevation of society which all history has to offer, and the efficacy of which is triumphantly established by the history of eighteen centuries.

The last paragraph records man's glad acceptance of God's witness to himself. And, surely, this is the least man can do. If gratitude, childlike, affectionate, and glowing is ever due, it is due from those to whom such offers have been made. As to those by whom they have been truly received they need no injunction to cultivate a grateful heart. O, how blessed is the individual who "knows the joyful sound;" how blessed the home where it is welcomed and celebrated; how blessed were the entire world if under its most salutary control. It is, indeed, difficult to see how the glad tidings can be rejected by any one—such is its authority, coming as it does from God; such is its suitability to human wants—wants the deepest and the most urgent: such is its preciousness, for the benefits it offers can proceed only from the Almighty Giver of "every good and perfect gift."

Yet how is such a revelation of wisdom, love, and power received by Renan and his critical school? With disdain. They forsooth are full and satisfied. They are self-sufficient. They disown that mild and well-founded authority. They reject that gentle yoke. They will work out their own salvation!

VIII. *God bears witness of himself in the Hebrew home.* I take the Hebrew home as a specimen of home in general, in its bearings on the religious life. This I do not merely because it is a definite and limited subject in itself, but because of its superiority to other ancient homes, and because it is to a considerable extent the parent of the Christian home.

A home differs from a house in being the abode of a family. It is, then, with the essentials of a family that we have here to do. What is a family? The word, of Latin origin, denotes, in its earliest use, a collection of domestic slaves born in the house. A secondary meaning is that of a race, that is, descendants from the same parents, or human property belonging to the same master. The facts present the family in its earliest pagan aspect. In Rome, Greece, and generally in the east as well as the west, a family was a number of human beings living under one tent, one roof, or congregated in one circle, all of whom, whether allied by blood or acquired by war, plunder, or purchase, were

the dependants of one master, whose will was supreme and whose word was law. Of these greater or smaller knots of individuals the wife of the proprietor was the head servant, a supremacy which was greatly qualified wherever polygamy prevailed, and in all cases by favourite children.

The soil was not auspicious to the growth and refinement of religion. Nevertheless, even here God bore witness of himself in his sovereignty. As the family itself, by concentrating individuals into a compact unity discouraged polytheism, so its head regarded as owner, master, lord, suggested and fostered the idea of unity in power and dominion, which naturally ascended from man to God, from the earthly Father to the Celestial Father from the visible and finite head of a house, to the Invisible and Infinite Head of the world. Here is the genesis of the idea of God considered as the sovereign of things below and things above. Such a result was natural, indeed so natural was it as to be inevitable in a being with whom the worship of a higher and unseen power was as necessary as the love of his children. Such a result, then, was the sure and unfailing product of the circumstances in which this kind of family relation existed and prevailed. It will be easily seen that, as culture grew and circumstances became more auspicious, the relation would become elevated and refined. In the same degree man's conception of God improved, until, when the heathen family became Hebrew and the Hebrew Christian, the sovereignty of power would rise, soften and expand into the sovereignty of love. Then the relation of master and slave, lord and dependant, was exchanged for the moral relation of Father, leading immediately to the spiritual relation of Heavenly Father.

These statements are verified by history in its deepest, universal lines. Equally are they attested by the successive forms of homage which man has paid to God. The one and the other are the strophé and the antistrophé, the answering voices on one side of God to man, and on the other of man to God, in the grand drama of man's life on earth, which, in another view is the course of God's eternal providence.

Conducive materially to the strict and proper monotheism of the descendants of Abraham, his divine sovereignty was beginning to take softer hues and a more genial complexion when the patriarch, the first truly historical personage, took up his abode in the low lands of Canaan. There under skies of subdued brilliancy, and on a soil no less lovely than prolific, a mode of human life was developed, the very name of which, the patriarchal or *fatherly rule*, denotes the true character of the domestic relations, and foretells a recognition of God which, compatible with the simplest form of social existence, will ever expand and rise so as to be at once the source and the crown of the highest and purest. What is this but an historical illustration of the promise

which scripture represents God as making to Abraham, to the effect that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed? The fulfilment of that promise is now taking place very day under our own eyes.

In a matter of so much consequence I should hardly feel I had done my duty if I did not fill up these bare outlines with some instances and illustrations.

The family springs from the union of man and woman in marriage. What position does the latter hold to the former in the Hebrew literature? A wholly new conception here comes into view. That of master and slave gives place to that even of equals. The early narratives of Genesis contain two accounts of the formation of woman, which, however, teach the same great and harmonising truth. The former makes woman to have been created at the same time, and in the same way as man, and identifies the two, so as to give the idea that the one is but the counterpart and the complement of the other. (Gen. i., 26, 27; comp. v., 2). The latter, creating the woman as if by an afterthought, yet represents her as "bone of man's bone, and flesh of man's flesh," that is as one in origin, and one in nature. The intimacy of the two is specially indicated in the Hebrew by making the word for woman simply the feminine form of the word for man, so that just as we say poet and poetess, the Hebrew says *nan* and *man-ess*, *aish* and *aish-ee*, woman in consequence is merely man with a difference, a difference not of essence but of form. Further, the tenderness and perpetuity of the union are signified by the sacred writer when he adds: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh," or rather one being. Yet another token of the unity of the wedded couple is given when the woman is expressly described not as man's slave, or even as his companion, but as "a help meet for him;" that is, one who from correspondence was suitable to give him help. Woman then is man's helper, and she is his helper because she is his second self.

With that unfailing moral instinct by which he selected the grand, universal, and everlasting verities out of the multifarious contents of the sacred books of his nation, our Lord took this text and made it the marriage law of his kingdom when, in proof of the laxity of divorce prevalent in his day, he replied to the pharisees who tried to ensnare him in the consequent theological and domestic meshes: "Have ye not read that He which made them (man and wife) at the beginning made them male and female, wherefore they twain are one; what, then, God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

The marriage bond has then its origin and sanction in the act of God and the approbation of Christ on one side, and on the other in the inmost relations, the deepest uses, and the purest

sanctities of our nature. The lofty position thus, on the highest authority, assigned to woman, men—yea, men bearing the Christian name—have done much to lower and degrade, and never more than by the establishment of that court by which divorce is made at once easy and polluting. The evil must disappear before one of those tendencies of the age which, without the name, are Christianising society in its depths, and by which woman is being gradually but effectually lifted to a position which morals would pronounce true and rightful did not the Bible make such a judgment unnecessary.

The sanctity of home is thus assured, and from saintly homes all good things come, nor least the idea and the recognition of God, the Father of all the families of the earth.

The birth took place in a Hebrew home, for there the parental relation was not only natural, virtuous, and honourable, but intense. The Hebrew character is thoroughly domestic. It possesses a richness and a delicacy all its own. Specially affectionate, as well as chaste, is the heart of the Hebrew woman. Hence arose a species of home life which for purity, grace, and moral force, even Christianity has rarely surpassed. The central focus of that life was the love and service of God. If the highest form of it wore parental features, God would be worshipped in the Hebrew home under no image inferior to that of a father.

In reality the position of the Hebrew mother was dignified, because independent. She had as a function so an individuality of her own. As her heart so her will stood for much in the family affairs, were it not preponderant even in early ages. The liberty which we see Hebrew women enjoy in the Scripture, both before and after marriage, forms a striking contrast with their sequestration throughout the remoter East. Let us call to mind the well defined as well as nicely characterised portraits of Sarah, Hagar, Rebecca, Ruth, Martha, Mary, and we shall feel that we have before us, not the monotonous dolls of the modern harem, but real personalities, each exercising an influence according to her own qualities and doing no little to imprint her own features on her household. Let us call to mind, also, the women who, with Miriam, Moses's sister, at their head, celebrated the deliverance from Egypt with song, music, and dance (Exod. xv., 20); the daughters of Shiloh, who, as a matter of ordinary occurrence, danced in the vineyards, having no other protection than their innocence, whom, however, the young men were at liberty to accost (Judg. xxi., 21); the women from all the cities of Israel, who, after David's victory over the Philistines, met Saul with music and dancing, and while they compliment the monarch, raise his conquering servant to the skies (1 Sam. xviii., 6, 8). Sometimes, even during the age of disturbance and violence, called that of the Judges, women hold supreme command, like Deborah, or perform acts of daring patriotism, like Jael, or acquire perma-

nent fame for self-sacrifice, like Jephthah's daughter. It was owing to the independent part sustained by the Hebrew women that Jezabel made herself infamous to all posterity (1 Kings xvi., 31; 2 Kings ix., 37), and that Athaliah exercised a tyranny of six years' duration after destroying all the seed royal (2 King xi.). At a later time, Huldah, the prophetess, enjoyed consideration so great that she was consulted on grave affairs of church and state by the chief priest Hilkiah and the chief dignitaries of the crown (2 Kings xxii., 14). In all classes of Hebrew society the married woman possesses a large degree of independence by the side of her husband. How important a part is played by Manoah's wife, the mother of Samson, in the case of her pregnancy (Judg. xiii). Abigail, wife of the opulent Nabal, warned by a servant of the danger that threatens her husband, goes, without his cognizance, to turn aside the storm (1 Sam. xxv., 14, 37). The princess Michal, seeing her husband David on one occasion yielding to what she thought excessive hilarity and freedom, does not fear to address to him severe reproaches (2 Sam. vi., 20). The Shunamite, a "great woman," who honours Elisha with hospitality, sets out of her own motion to visit the prophet with a servant, and when her husband asks the reason of her visit she withholds a distinct reply.—2 Kings iv., 22, 24.

In truth, the Hebrew wife was neither a toy nor a slave, but the head of her household, which she governed in such a way as even to add to its pecuniary resources. Witness the graphic description given in Proverbs xxxi., of

THE IDEAL HEBREW WIFE.

"A noble wife who can find?
 Her value is far higher than that of pearls.
 The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
 That he will not be in want of substance.
 She doth him good and not evil
 All the days of her life.
 She seeketh wool and flax
 And she worketh with joyous hands.
 She is like merchant ships,
 From afar she bringeth her food.
 She even riseth while it is yet night.
 And giveth meat to her household and their task to her maidens.
 She setteth her mind upon a field and buyeth it;
 From the produce of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
 She girdeth her loins with strength,
 And maketh her arms robust.
 She taketh pains to know that her merchandise is good.
 Her lamp is not extinguished by night.
 She applieth her hand to the distaff.
 And her hands take hold of the spindle,
 Wide doth she open her hand to the afflicted;
 She reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
 She is not afraid of the snow for her household,
 For they are all clad in double garments.
 Coverings of tapestry she maketh for herself;

Fine linen and purple is her clothing.
 Her husband is honoured in the public places,
 When he sitteth with the elders of the land.
 She maketh garments of fine linen and selleth them,
 And she delivereth girdles to the trafficker.
 Strength and honour are her garments,
 And she laugheth at the future day.
 Her mouth she openeth with wisdom ;
 And on her tongue is the law of kindness.
 She watcheth the doings of her household,
 And the bread of sloth she eateth not.
 Her children rise up and call her blessed ;
 Her husband riseth up and praiseth her ; saying—
 ‘ Many daughters have done nobly,
 But thou excellest them all.’
 Comeliness is deceitful, and beauty is vain ;
 But the woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.
 Give to her the fruit of her hands,
 And let her works be her praise in the public places.”

Was ever a finer portrait drawn ? Woman's rights and woman's duties combine to make the perfect woman.

Homer's females are deservedly admired, but they must yield the palm to this genuine Hebrew wife, in whom the useful and the beautiful are so admirably interwoven ; the useful, not alone of domestic routine, but of commercial prosperity ; the beautiful, not of person, but of character. If indeed the painting has a fault, it is that the wife not only eclipses her husband, but leaves him with no independent circle of action for himself ; unless, indeed, we suppose that he was absorbed in judicial or political affairs. However this may be, the picture is one which may well suggest useful hints to Christian mothers, especially to such as are in what is called “Easy Circumstances.” At least in the active benevolence of this Hebrew wife, they may well own and follow a model.

The general tenor of the facts now adduced would authorise the assertion that monogamy was the rule in Hebrew homes. Other passages, however, might be adduced tending to the same result. Prov. v., 18 ; xii., 4 ; xix., 14 ; Ps. cxxviii., 3 ; Malachi ii., 14. Indeed, several laws of the Pentateuch imply the prevalence of monogamy (Deut. xx., 7 ; xxiv., 5). If several kings, notably Solomon, gave an example of polygamy, they by thus unworthily imitating the vices of the great oriental courts, set themselves in flagrant opposition with the manners of the nation and the positive requirements of its laws.—Deut. xvii., 17.

The family relation hardly exists without children, but having determined the position of the mother, we have by anticipation determined that of the offspring. Israel was a commonwealth of equals, and in consequence every child was treated as a human being, a son of the common creator and governor, and destined in due time to become a citizen.

These general principles underwent only slight modifications

According to patriarchal usages the eldest son exercised a certain authority over his brothers, and enjoyed certain privileges (Gen. xxv., 31, 34; xlviii., 18; xlix, 3). The dignity passed on one oldest son to another. Recognising this superiority of law in later ages acknowledged merely the right of the oldest to take a double share of the father's property, provided he was the first fruit of his father's manhood, that is the first born, for if he was preceded by a girl, he enjoyed no special privilege. (Deut. xxi., 17). Sons alone divided the patrimonial possessions. If there were no sons, the property fell to the daughters. Heiresses, however, were forced to marry in their own tribe. When there were neither sons nor daughters the inheritance passed to uncles on the father's side, and then to the next of blood. On the part of girls orphans were married and settled in life at the expense of their brothers. Widows found a sufficient refuge in the natural protection of their children, or in the bosom of the family out of which they had come (Lev. xxii., 13). Provision moreover was made for them in tithes and other public offerings, which, as being under the fostering wing of religion, did not inflict on the recipients the taint of pauperism. (Deut. xiv., 29; xvi., 11, 14; xv., 19-21; xxvi., 12.) They were also expressly recommended to favourable consideration.—Exod. xxii., 22.

These benignant arrangements naturally lead us to expect love and reverence as the cement between parents and children. Respect to father and mother is one of the fundamental laws of Jewish social life. The observance of the requirement was ordered by the severest penalties.—Exod. xxi., 15, 17.

The birth of a child was one of the most joyous of family events, especially when it was a boy, in whom the father saw a guarantee of the preservation of his name and lineage. In general, mothers nursed their children. The act of weaning was accompanied by religious festivities. (Gen. xxi., 8; 1 Sam. i., 24.) During their early years children of both sexes remained under the fostering care of their mothers, whose educational efforts were, in the case of opulent families, assisted by governesses. When boys were old enough to do without female aid, they passed into the hands of their fathers, who conducted or superintended their instruction (2 King x., 1, 5); while their moral and religious training was the special object of paternal attention (Prov. xiii., 1), and was facilitated and promoted by the exposition of the catalogue, as well as by maxims embodying the wisdom of centuries in concise and pithy sentences such as abound in the book of Proverbs. As the sons grew in years they were initiated, under their father's eyes, in the labours of agriculture, in some handicraft, or in military exercises. Girls were trained by the example and direction of their mothers in household duties. Living, for the most part, within the sanctuary of home, they occasionally went out to procure water, or guard the flocks.

In a kind of domestic life so simple, so natural, so cherishing and so elevating, marriage was a season of even hilarious festivity and death and bereavement of deep and overpowering woe. The and other features we must, however, leave undescribed, and terminate our family picture by adducing the fine portrait drawn by Job (xxix.) of the aged Hebrew patriarch and benefactor, which we may contemplate the fully ripened fruit of domestic piety, as grown and perfected on a Hebrew soil.

THE HOARY HEAD IN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Oh, that I were as in months past,
As in the days when God protected me;
When his lamp shone above my head:
When, by his light, I walked in darkness.
As I was in the days of my prosperity,
When the counsel of God was in my tent;
When the Almighty was yet with me;
When I washed my steps in milk,
And the rock poured forth for me rivers of oil;
When I went forth from my gate into the city;
When in the open place I fixed my seat.
The young men saw me and hid themselves;
And the aged arose and stood up.
Princes restrained their speech,
And placed their hand upon their mouth.
Nobles suffered not their voice to be heard,
And their tongue clave to their palate.
When the ear heard me it blessed me;
And when the eye saw it praised me;
Because I delivered the poor who cried,
And the fatherless and him who had no helper.
The blessing of him who was ready to perish came upon me,
And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
I put on equity, and it clothed me as a robe;
And as a turban was my justice,
Eyes was I to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
A father was I to the needy;
And the cause that I knew not I searched out.
And I broke the tusks of the unjust,
And from his teeth I snatched the prey.
And I said: In my nest I shall expire,
And like the sand I shall multiply my days.
My root will lie open to the waters,
And the dew will lodge all night on my branches.
My glory shall ever be fresh with me,
And my bow will be renewed in my hand.
Men listened to me and waited,
And were silent for my counsel.
After I had spoken they spake not again;
And my speech dropped upon them;
And they waited for me as for the rain,
And they opened their mouth as for the latter rain.
Did I but smile upon them they could not believe it;
And the light of my countenance they did not dim.
I chose their way, and I sat as their chief,
And dwelt with them as a king amongst his troops;
As one who comforteth those who mourn."

The poem is itself a witness for God, for it surely displays, in traits of wondrous beauty, the venerableness of old age when moulded and lighted up by the hand of true, simple, practical religion. A power so morally enriching, so spiritually sanctifying, and so socially ennobling, would transmute the wide earth into the family, even after the spirit of Christ, and foreshadow the glorious and happy day when God shall be all in all.

II. THE GOD OF IDEALISTIC MATERIALISM.

After explaining the conditions of the solemn question of God, and specially showing that it is principally in the moral and spiritual sphere that He is to be sought and found, we have now heard his voice and seen (so to say) his form, as He bears witness of himself specially in the Bible. The lessons that have been taught might be summarised thus :—

God bears witness of himself

- (1) in the beneficent influence of the outer universe ;
- (2) in man considered as his image and likeness ;
- (3) in conscience ;
- (4) in the pure of heart ;
- (5) in man's spiritual nature ;
- (6) in the general tenor of Sacred Scripture ;
- (7) in the ancient Hebrew prophets ;
- (8) in the Hebrew home.

Before I pass on I beg the student to review the past, and form for himself some conception of God. In the request, I am not asking him to construct the Deity by abstract *a priori* considerations, nor to deduce the idea with the aid of analogy from his own personal consciousness. It is the God of the Bible that I wish him now to apprehend, and the apprehension must arise from Biblical materials. Nor do I ask for a repetition of what has been learnt from the pages of Scripture. It is rather the essence of the instruction they supply. What is the centre of the whole, and what its indispensable accompaniments? The substance is presented in the two words Jehovah and Father. As we former, God is the living one, that is, he who has life of and himself, and so is the source of life to the universe. As the latter, God is the loving one, that is, to live is with him to love, and to love is to live. Hence, He lives to communicate himself, and what He communicates He loves. Love is the source of his wisdom, and his wisdom and his love coalesce to form his power. Accordingly, life, love, wisdom, and power constitute God, and God, consisting of these qualities, is ever-blessed in making these qualities co-extensive with his sovereignty in all worlds and in all ages. It follows that the universe, the plane of God's action, is God's house and man's home ; that men are God's children ; that

the present state is man's school ; and the future man's workshop. While both the present and the future are a succession of alternating expansions and fulfilments—an endless series of ever-recurring springs, summers, autumns, in regard to which the life we now lead is the winter, or at best the budding season.

Such is the God of revelation, and such is the universe as made and governed of the ever-living Father. Most acceptable is God thus seen, loved, worshipped, and obeyed. Most benign is the reign of the ever-living Father in the hearts of his children. Most cheerful their prospects, for most sublime their destiny. Nor is it by any means the least auspicious element in their lot that, as they have one God, so do they form one family, and being thus all brothers, are all equal.

This, the God of revelation, is the alternative I offer to the God of sceptical criticism, which, with no slight hesitation, I proceed to set before you in the words of one of its most distinguished hierophants.

It must not be supposed that I grudgingly introduce a philosopher into these sacred halls. Rather I am prepared to welcome every earnest and reverent teacher. The topics are too solemn, the issues too momentous not to make one glad to receive aid from any quarter. Nor do I deny the need of aid. Equally I do not exclude speculators from our consultative circle. Let every one do his best. Every increase of light—the smallest—is a gain. Even if you only rectify our apprehensions, and that in ever so slight a degree, we will profit by your studies, and own ourselves your debtors. To know God, to some extent, as he is, forms the most all privileges the highest ; to make him known, however imperfectly, is the greatest of services. Yes ; let the scrutiny be of the most rigid kind. Even those whose spirit we must condemn we would not thrust out. Yet the freedom we concede to others we claim for ourselves, and reserve the right of pronouncing irreverent what is irreverent, and inconclusive what is inconclusive. And when, as in Renan's case, the positive result is too diminutive or too dim to be clearly perceived, we shall be sorry rather than reproachful, and all our rejoicing will be reserved for the fact that, if disappointed by him, we can turn to One who has and who is ever uttering "the words of eternal life."—John vi., 68.

A FATHER READING THE BIBLE.

'Twas early day, and sunlight streamed
Soft through a quiet room,
That hushed, but not forsaken, seemed
Still, but with nought of gloom ;
For there, serene, in happy age,
Whose hope is from above,
A father communed with the page
Of Heaven's recorded love.

Pure fell the beam, and meekly bright,
 On his grey holy hair,
 And touched the page with tenderest light,
 As if its shrine were there.
 And oh ! that patriarch's aspect shone
 With something lovelier far—
 A radiance, all the spirit's own,
 Caught not from sun or star.

Some word of life e'en then had met
 His calm, benignant eye ;
 Some ancient promise, breathing yet
 Of immortality !
 Some martyr's prayer, wherein the glow
 Of quenchless faith survives :
 While every feature said—" I know
 That my Redeemer lives ! "

And silent stood his children by,
 Hushing their very breath,
 Before their solemn sanctity
 Of thoughts o'ersweeping death.
 Silent—yet did not each young breast
 With love and reverence melt ?
 Oh ! blest are those fair girls, and blest
 That home where God is felt.—*Hemans.*

assured as we are that in these solemn inquiries success depends
 on the state of mind with which they are approached, we look
 for all for a lowly and reverent heart. Is that the disposition
 sought to the subject by Renan ?

Criticism does not know respect : it judges gods and men. This irre-
 verent power, directing a firm and scrutinising eye on every thing, is even by
 its essence guilty of high treason against God and man. Before it every
 eighty must bend, and its audacity growing with its success, there comes
 a day when it dares attack the God of the past, and look in the face him
 to whom generations of worshippers have kneeled."—"La Liberté,"
 p. 365.

And is this the attitude of true philosophy ? I had thought
 philosophy was modest, gentle, patient, ever open to light,
 seeking the truth from purest love. Instead of this it is here
 depicted as a direct assailant, an irreverent assailant, which boldly
 recklessly attacks the central and most fondly cherished faith
 of all by-gone generations. Nay worse : it is a rebel, a rebel who
 wages war not only on the central throne of the universe but also
 on its occupant.

On the great problem of God two questions ask for attention
 in reply : Does God exist ? If so, what is God ?

Does God exist ? Renan never answers "No." Neither a
 simple "No," nor a simple "Yes" does he utter. This syste-
 matic evasion is scarcely ingenuous. A clear deliverance on
 the point is due to himself no less than to his readers. The
 evasiveness begets suspicions which some will welcome and

cherish, and others hesitate to entertain, as injurious to one whom they are anxious to respect and certainly would be grieved to misrepresent.

This silence involves me in difficulty. On such a point I cannot be more explicit than my author, without the risk of placing him in a wrong category. Unable to call him a theist, I am unwilling to call him an atheist, and so must leave the issue there where it is left by Renan himself.

But here the difficulty is chiefly felt. Where does Renan leave the issue? The question has more than a personal interest. It matters little what this individual or that thinks even on the most solemn points. It matters much what position is held by extreme negativism. It is possible that Renan, occupying a representative character, may here indicate a pause, if not some retrocession.

The gross forms of atheism of the materialistic school of France in the last century expressly and even defiantly denied God. Certainly I should not be justified if I imputed the same unqualified negative to Hegel and his school. And, unwilling to press Renan on a point where manifestly he studies reticence, I am half inclined to think that with him the question is rather not whether God is, but *what* he is. In order to make my meaning clear, he seeks, let us suppose, to discover the form rather than the reality of the divine existence. God is—this is certain; but what? What does his existence include, and how may it be correctly described? Should this be his position it is one of interest and not of repulsiveness, as is that of the open and avowed atheist. Yet, even here the most reverent student soon finds himself in a dark and dense atmosphere. How can my finite intellect formulate the Infinite God? What is he rigid like? To what can we properly compare him? If we could seize some analogy, would the changeful and fitting character of words allow us to retain it? Here again we are thrown back on revelation, taken in the widest sense of the term. All true and reliable knowledge of God is self-disclosure on God's part. Man's business here is not to search so much as to apprehend; not to prove, but to learn; not to discover, but to recognise.

The *media* he possesses for the purpose are adequate. He has in his in-born possibilities a sense of the divine. That sense, like every other, may be trained and refined so as to become as reliable as his moral sense, or as the intuitions of his consciousness. The sense is trained and refined by God himself. The history of our race, is a history of the education through which God has conducted and is conducting his children. The lesson of lessons is that "God is good to all, and his tender mercy over all his works." We learn that lesson in our individual experience, and give back for acknowledgment of God and his goodness the words—

Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And all that is within me bless his holy name.

The general voice of humanity, expressed in this pious recognition, is a criterion by which truth may be distinguished from error on this supreme concern. That criterion I proceed to apply to our critic's representations. The application must be strict in order to be trustworthy, but it shall not be knowingly unjust or more severe than necessary, for far rather would I greet a brother than Renan than confute an opponent. But, then, I demand explicitness. Instead, I am presented with confusion. Witness the following :—

"The enormous misunderstanding which so often transforms into blasphemy of God his most sincere and pious worshippers is before all a grammatical error. People are not agreed as to the words. What hymn equals the poem of Lucretius? The life of what saint offers a more perfect ideal of asceticism and moral perfection than the life of such and such a thinker of our times in whom I know only one illusion, namely, that he believes himself an atheist? Ah! how inferior a homage to the Deity are the low and almost always selfish prayers of the vulgar in comparison with that excessive reserve which at times keeps from the lips of the scrupulous philosopher the word (God) which so many profane by levity and hypocrisy. . . . Humanity, which in its totality, is incapable of delicate criticism, never witnesses without disquiet the ruin of the symbols which it has long accepted. Like the ancient patriarch, when it has lost its idols, it exclaims, 'I have lost my gods!' One duty of philosophy is to seek out formulas continually approaching the truth. Thence a contradiction which will never cease except with the human mind.—'Essais,' pp. 67, 68.

We have no love of superstition, but superstition is a less evil than blank atheism; and there may be an atheistic superstition. Superstition, which is religion carried to extravagance, bad as it is, is less to be deprecated than atheism run mad, if only because history shows the former to be corrigible, whereas the latter is hopeless. The one, as a rank growth from a good seed, may be made sound by altered conditions of soil and clime. The other is a weed, a tare, not so much sapless as empty and void. "The prayers of the vulgar" may be low in a critic's view, but that may show his narrowness and superficiality rather than any true elevation. If the vulgar pray to God sincerely, and obey him faithfully, they pray acceptably and are objects of his favour. If no prayer is to be put up except by those who know God as he really is, communion with God is impossible and worship must cease. Not what the worshipper thinks of God's essence, but rather what he thinks of God's character and specially his relation to himself, is the great point, as for the creature so with the Creator. Not with a critic's eye, but a Heavenly Father's, does God look when his children kneel before him, and not on the logical faculty but "on the heart" does he direct his thought when he contemplates his answer to their request. As to the critic who suffers under the illusion of believing himself an atheist, one would think that in such a matter he was the only "just judge." If the line of demarcation between theism and atheism is so very dim as not to be visible to the eye of a

philosopher, philosophy is after all in a sorry condition, and has little that is good and useful to offer to mankind. However, when a philosopher is not allowed to believe himself an atheist on the vouchers of self-knowledge, without having illusion imputed to him by a fellow philosopher, common men may be tempted to bid good-bye to both, leaving them if they please to settle the dispute by all the logical forces at their command; only hoping that in doing so they may come to one of those formulas which "continually approach the truth." But here Renan raises our expectation only to disappoint it, for the next sentence runs: "Thence a contradiction which will never cease except with the human mind." What, indeed, but disappointment could be expected from a paragraph which begins as this begins? Cast your eye back on it, reader, and answer me a question or two. You are told of "an erroneous misunderstanding." What is it? "A grammatical error." What is "a grammatical error"? An error in grammar. What is grammar? The science of writing a language according to the usages of its classical authors. Is it then some error of spelling, of syntax, or of idiom, that is it an issue? No.

It is a question of morals. You do wrong when you impute atheism to a theist. Admitted—but then this is not a grammatical error. It is a breach of duty. What, however, if the wrong is done by the individual in question himself? And this is the case really put by our critic. One who is in truth a theist holds himself to be an atheist. Well, surely he is the best judge. You, however, declare him mistaken. Yes, "theist" and "atheist" mean different things as contemplated by you and him. "He suffers under an illusion," you affirm. On what grounds do you thus disallow a man's judgment touching his religious position? Disagreement as to the meaning of the words. Yes; but your pupil has a right to take the words in the meaning which satisfies himself. However, is your meaning of these preferable? What is it? You do not tell us. Instead of affixing the right meaning to the words, you run off into vague generalities, the bearing of which on the question it is difficult to see. Only one thing is clear, namely, that if you studied obscurity you have not wholly failed in your object.

This confounding of opposites to the utter mystification of his utterances, is carried to the extreme when Renan declares ("L'Asie Revue," p. 502) that "the avowed atheist of the eighteenth century, who in France denied God, preached the true God." The true God of Renan they may have preached, but of no one else except such as are *ejusdem farinae*. Indeed, it is only by following Renan in his ambiguity that we can allow that they preached God at all. In general their system of thought was gross materialism, with which the idea of God in any usual or proper sense is utterly incompatible. Nor, whatever Renan may try to

insinuate, did they make any secret of their atheism? More ingenuous than some who talk great things about morality, they for the most part openly and fully expounded their views as a part of their hostile tactics against religion in general and Catholicism in particular. Certainly they did not cloak their unbelief under the most positive and sacred terms of religion and Christianity. However, they preached the true God. In their preachings then we may find Renan's God. What did they preach? I will not disfigure these pages with their repulsive representations. One must suffice.

D'Holbach, author of *La Système de la Nature*, calls God "a phantom," "a gigantic man," that "infinite nothing."

"Let it not be said," he adds, "that the existence of God is at least a problem; it is just simply an impossibility."

He held that men were incapable of rectifying the idea of God :—

"You cannot know God truly unless you are God. Leave God, then, and leave to nature; follow the line that nature has traced without turning aside to chimeras."

The explicitness of these men reminds me of similar explicitness on the part of one of Renan's co-workers, which is not unworthy of being imitated by him :—

"I have a watch; the watch goes, and explains itself quite alone. I do not inquire whether there is a watchmaker. I even declare that there is not."

M. Littré may declare what he pleases, but a watchmaker there is, or was, and one who made that particular watch. Equally is he at liberty to inquire or not. He may even be as content in his indifference as the veriest boor; but never will he be able to affirm truly that the watch explains itself. Instead of doing so, it is, apart from human agency, an *Œdipean* riddle.

Renan has, however, more than once told his readers who is an atheist and who is not :—

"The man who takes life seriously, and employs his energies in pursuit of some great object is the religious man. The frivolous man, superficial and without pure morality, he is the impious man."—"Etudes," pref., p. xv.

In another publication ("*La Liberté*," iv., 147), he says that "the frivolous man is the atheist." The substance of the remarks is a simple evasion. Whether that is a frivolous or an earnest act we leave the reader to decide. In critical works atheism is not a style of character, but a mode of thought. Going from the intellectual order of things into the moral, Renan gets over the point at issue without committing himself one way or the other. The man who takes life in earnest, and consecrates it to some useful purpose, may, according to circumstances, be a thinker, an artist, a law-giver, or a breaker of stones on the road, but certainly

is not a religious man unless he believes in God and strives to regulate his life by God's will. Accordingly, when Renan asserts ("Explications" 30) that "it is the most pious man that declares himself an atheist," I must take the liberty to pronounce that avowal nonsense. A man who declares himself an atheist may be an honest man, but pious he cannot be, for piety is the conscious recognition of God in thought, sentiment, and act, while *atheism*, by its derivation, denotes the denial or repudiation of God.

Occasions, however, there are when Renan can speak out with a frankness that is even rude and offensive. As we have seen, he uses the old terms soul, immortality, providence, in new senses. The same is true of God. If there is a term which demands a substitute, it deserves to be employed reverently it is this. The truly religious man dislikes all controversy which compels him to speak of God as he would speak of any common place. Renan warily vindicates to himself the epithet religious. His object is to promote religion. Why, then, does he not abstain, if only out of respect to others, from divesting religious terms of the halo of sanctity thrown around them by the veneration of at least fifty centuries. What is the fact? In one of his earliest works ("La Liberté," iv., p. 348), he writes:—

"God, providence, soul—so many good old words, a little cumbrous and materialistic."

In a later edition of the passage, he writes:—

"God, providence, immortality, so many good old words, a little cumbrous perhaps, which philosophy will interpret in senses more and more refined."—"Etudes," p. 419.

That is, we suppose, until they lose their real meaning and evaporate. He adds, that philosophy "will never replace them with advantage," and, therefore, it retains these good old cumbrous words and simply takes them in a new sense, a sense difficult for the scholar to descry, and which is wholly hidden from common eyes. However, he declares distinctly against dropping them, alleging as his reason, not that he believes in the grand realities they represent in all languages, but because to "suppress them would be to put the human race off its road, and in language to separate yourself from the simple ones who in their manner worship so well." Is this sarcasm, or is it hypocrisy? Does the writer mean to damage these "good old words" by making them the heritage of the untaught and the silly? or does he pretend a respect for them and for the worship of the vulgar which he does not really feel? I know not; I do not know what to think or what to say—except that in all this there appears to me no little trifling with sacred things.

While, however, Renan finds it so difficult to be reverent toward God, he, strange to say, has an apology for Satan. Speaking

of the evil one, as he appears in Ary Scheffer's painting of *The Temptation*, he says :—

"Satan, this poor calumniated one, is only an unsuccessful revolutionist, whom the need of activity threw into hazardous enterprises. . . . A century which has set so many things once more on their legs, could hardly fail of grounds for excusing Satan."—"Etudes," p. 428.

The great problem is, however, at last entertained, but with what result ?

"The problem of the Supreme Cause addresses us, and escapes from us; it resolves itself, not into laws, but into poems (these poems are the religions of the world), or if we must here speak of laws, it is those of physics, of astronomy, of history, which only are the laws of being, and completely real."—"La Revue," p. 390.

You ask with all the eagerness of an intense love of truth, "Am I justified in saying God is?" And you are told : "The problem of the Supreme Cause escapes from us." If so—all is blank. What escapes from us is not ours. The question receives an answer and the answer is in effect a negative. Any way, we know nothing about it. It is a problem—a problem unsolved. The human mind cannot escape from the problem, but the problem escapes from the human mind. A solution is impossible.

What then is more suitable as descriptive of the condition of our race than the apostle's wail :

"O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Well, however, is it for human kind that it is not given up to the total darkness of the critical philosophy, but like Paul, can find full relief in the grateful acknowledgment of a Saviour, saying, "I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom.vii., 24-5.

Renan professes to avoid absolute statements and studies shades of thought. Those shades are often shadows. An instance occurs here. While declaring that the Supreme Cause escapes from us, he declares also that it resolves itself not into laws but poems. What is this but a shadow instead of a shade? Well, it is something else, for the second statement, which gives the natural history of the problem, contradicts the first statement, which says that the writer knows nothing about it, inasmuch as it escapes from him. Here again his figure of speech has beguiled him into logical error. A bird escaping from the hand (this is the metaphor) may be seen to fly away; but a problem that the mind cannot apprehend is to that mind nothing.

However, as the writer tells us something about an object which escapes from him, what does he say? "The problem resolves itself" What is meant? A problem may assume a new shape, as when we say that twice four are eight, and that eight divided by two equals four. Here you have the same fact pre-

sented under different aspects, and if you want to prove it your fingers may serve as cyphers. But how can the problem of the universe which you cannot solve resolve itself? What shall be changed? The problem? But then, it is no longer "the problem of the universe, namely, Does God exist? and, if so, what is he?" Or, shall the qualities of the problem change, the dark becoming clear, and the insolvable solvable. This, however, Renan does not mean, but the reverse.

The mystification is complete when the poems are identified with "the religions of the world." Now poems are works of art, the products of the human fancy. Such, then, are "the religions of the world." You ask for God, and receive for answer, Religions made by man. This, however, is our critic's true meaning: "There is nothing above man, and the old adage, *quæ supra nos, quid ad nos?* (what have we to do with what is above us?) has no meaning."—"La Revue," p. 374.) But if there is nothing above man, whence religion? Man makes his own religion even as he makes his own God. Religion in all its constituents is the spontaneous and unavoidable offspring of the human imagination.

We have thus arrived at clearness only to find ourselves landed in mere humanism. "There is nothing above man." Man is the centre of reality and the source of illusion. If so, which is which? Which the reality, and which the illusion? How does criticism know that all is not illusion—all, including its own principles and processes? Anyway, truth there cannot be, if only because we have no criterion whereby to distinguish the real from the unreal, fact from fiction. He who writes thus confutes himself, for he cuts all foundation from under his feet. But, while he thus abdicates his function by recognising universal scepticism, he leaves the basis of those untouched who hold of human beings in general, and know of themselves in particular, that religion, instead of being a poem, is the gravest and most beneficial of realities. The very sap of reality, then, must be the August Being whence it comes.

Moreover, no sooner has the critic forsaken laws than he recurs to his former allegiance, and now knows not only that laws supply the word of explanation, but what laws do and what laws do not; nay, what laws are real and what not. And although he had just repudiated laws, he declares that the solution is found in the sole laws of being—the sole that are completely real, namely, those of physics, astronomy, and history. What, not the laws of conscience? of intelligence? of mind? of consciousness? No; these are not real laws of being, still less *the* real laws or sources of existence. That is, astronomy made and sustains the stars. But what in reality is astronomy except man's conception of the way in which the equilibrium of the solar system is sustained. Here, again, in seeking for the supreme cause, we get not higher than the creature, man.

To state such averments is to confute them. The very fact that I feel a causal force in my inmost being, and feel also that causal force confined within very narrow limits, compels me to look for the "Great First Cause" in something resembling myself indeed, but also out of myself as well as in, and immeasurably surpassing myself in all my highest attributes.

Renan repudiates dogmatism. With what right let the astounding claims he here makes to universal knowledge declare.

Yet, while virtually claiming all but omniscience, he asserts :—

"Man has only to veil his face before the problem of the infinite."—"Job," *Introd.*, p. lxviii.

Be it so. Is not a critic a man? He, then, has to veil his face before the problem of the infinite. Instead of obeying his own doctrine our critic disowns the infinite in one breath and rebels against it in another. Declaring that nothing can be known, he declares also what are and what are not the causal forces of the universe.

This, one of Renan's latest utterances, robs us of all hope. If we have eyes wherewith to look after God, the use of them is nugatory, and after straining them to the utmost nothing remains but to close them in despair. Our despair is not qualified by being told that we have missed our way. Under the lights of our own minds we have looked for God in the works of his hands and found him everywhere. Instead, we ought to have looked for a solution of "the problem of the universe" in physical studies. What will be the result? Shall we find the solution we desire? O, no! but you will have studied the sole reality. The averment is contradicted by the mind whence it issued. More truly real is the thinker than anything he thinks, for his thinkings vary while he remains the same; and more truly real is man, the interpreter of nature, than the nature which he interprets. The outer world is not man's lord, but man is lord of the outer world.

Yet man himself has a Lord. This he knows and owns, and knows and owns in a way which logic cannot invalidate. Before *his* Lord, the Lord God Almighty, he bends his knee and adores, rising from the act of inmost homage a nobler and a stronger being than before.

Such an experience is worth all the assumptions of a philosophy which, professing to be founded on observation, is constantly rushing into universals of which observation knows nothing.

The same scepticism and assumption are repeated in the following extraordinary passage :—

"To those that are animated by a lofty curiosity we say study as philosophers chemistry, physiology, history. Dissect life of all kinds, analyse every substance, learn every language, compare all literatures; let each word of the past deliver to us whatever it conceals; let every corner of the soil give forth the ruins it contains. Search and tell me if after so many human races have

passed away ours will pass away in its turn, if our sages may hope to direct it a little, or if to expiate subtlety by feebleness is a law of fate. Tell me the secrets of birth and death, the secrets of the metal and the stone, the secrets of the last cellule where life is born. Who knows if the real infinite is as vast as is supposed? And who knows whether the grand law which shall give us power over the ultimate atom will always escape from us?"—"La Revue," p. 385.

Well, if the labour you recommend is not to be more productive to me than it has been to you, I see no reason for passing out of my path into yours. For myself, I trace God in all kinds of law, holding that law manifests God as much and as certainly as that a kind word manifests and implies a kind heart. And consequently I find God in the outer universe of what is called matter, as well as in the inner universe of what is called mind. But if I am to give a preference it must be in favour of mind.

But you are not placed face to face with the infinite by the dissecting knife of the anatomist, or the pick and spade of the antiquarian. The shortest and the surest way to the infinite is your own mind. Mind reveals mind. The spirit of man is the spirit of God in miniature. The father is seen in the child. A true knowledge of Jesus—the type, as well as the Saviour, of man—is a true knowledge of God. That knowledge you can never attain to by grubbing among objects which contain least of the infinite. As well try to discover the laws of life among the dead bones of Ezekiel's valley (xxxvii). When the utmost subtlety of thought fixes itself on material forces and extracts from them nothing but "who knows if?" the result proves that *it* "is condemned to expiate its folly by its feebleness."

While thus directing the student to physics for instruction, Renan, with characteristic inconsistency, hands over the problem of the infinite to psychology, that is, the science of the living principle in man. Yes, certainly, study psychology; study yourself. And none the less because Renan tells you that you will conclude by holding that there is no cosmical agent, no external mover; the source of reason is in man alone; as in what follows:—

"The fault of this system (proposed by Ibn Roschd) is its introducing a cosmical agent into a problem (man's intelligence) which ought to be solved by simple psychology. To set up man as a statue in face of the sun, and to expect life to descend to animate him is to expect what is impossible. Every system which places the source of reason out of man condemns itself to the penalty of never explaining the fact of knowledge. Psychology must not apply to any external mover in order to fill up the empty places in its hypothesis."—"Averroes," p. 141.

It follows that reason in man is its own source. Man is the highest being in the universe. Man is God, and God is man; or if there is in the universe any thing higher than man, that something, whatever it is, is not reason, for reason in its source is human. You are not to take a cosmical agent into your account

when you set about explaining the origin of man's intelligence. So says the Master. Those who have taken the oath of allegiance to him will listen and obey none else.

Having questioned whether the infinite can be discovered, and whether if discovered it will prove truly infinite, and having shut out the infinite reason from the schools of philosophy, Renan yet finds the contradictory propositions that God is and God is not all but equally acceptable.

"Of the infinite object with which philosophy occupies itself we may say with almost the same reason that he is and that he is not."—"La Revue," p. 375.

In this translation I have supposed that the writer intends to speak of God. Accordingly I have used the masculine pronoun *he*. Equally might I have employed the neuter *it*. The original allows the one or the other. Had I been influenced by Renan's view of the infinite, already explained, I must have preferred *it* to *he*. However, whether *it* or *he*, the infinite object may exist and may not exist. If you say "no," you lose a thing of some sort; if you say "yes," you gain you know not what.

Similar blanks ensue from this utterance:—

"As to God, do you make him personal or impersonal? Of the two theories, the former is not true and the latter is not false."—"La Revue," p. 390.

Let us make this a little clearer, thus:—

1. God is personal; this is not true.
2. God is impersonal; this is not false.

The first proposition, as not being true, must be struck out. The second proposition, as being not false, must be accepted as not false. But what is not false must be true, since true is the only antithesis to false. It follows that the second proposition stands, and God is impersonal. Will constitutes personality, and if Renan's God has no will, he offers us in God nothing but a name or a thing. Indeed, this ensues also from the first; for since personal or impersonal is the sole supposable alternative, what is not personal must be impersonal. Negatively and positively then is God here declared to be impersonal. As such He is inferior to me who am a person, and consequently I cannot adore him. But a being whom I cannot worship is to me no God at all. Moreover, once more we find the very qualities which are God's essence consigned to the dark, turbid, and dismal regions of extreme scepticism:—

"This absolute being,—is he free? is he conscious? Yes and no are equally inapplicable to questions of this kind."—"Opinion Nationale."

Conscious ourselves, we hold God to be conscious. God, considered as unconscious, is no God; for consciousness is the

essence of intelligent life. No consciousness, no intelligence. An unconscious God is no more God than a stock or a stone. Nor can I, who am morally free, own for God a being who is not morally free. I do not say that freedom or consciousness is exactly the same in God and man. Nor do I say that the one epithet or the other should be applied to God without qualification. Man's ascent to God is analogical; nevertheless it is real. My own freedom is a reality. Indeed it is the condition of all that is truly real within me. What is real in my inner and my outer life is such in virtue of my moral freedom. Among those realities is the tendency to universalise. Universalising my own reality, I am naturally and unavoidably led to the Infinite Reality, whom I believe to be perfectly free some way after the manner in which I am imperfectly free. My freedom is circumscribed by the accidents of my mortality. Remove those accidents and perfect freedom ensues. Thus I am even compelled to call God free by the very law which makes me own God. A god enslaved is not God, but He or that is God which holds him in subjection. That, we presume, is the fate or destiny which Renan is wont to place at the root of the universe.

With these preliminaries let us return to the statement, if only because it will serve to show what our philosopher's "absolute being" is. Is he conscious? "Yes." You must not say "yes." Well, then, "no." You must not say "no." What, then, may I say? Neither "yes" nor "no." But he is "absolute," that is, supremely perfect. It follows that the supremely perfect being is neither positively conscious nor positively unconscious. In other words, he has neither the qualities of intelligence nor unintelligence. At least, neither the one nor the other must be ascribed to him. And yet he is "absolute." Why call *him* absolute of whom you obviously know nothing? Why, except to intimate that he is *absolved* or freed from every positive quality? He is, however, a "being." Of what kind, finite or infinite? conscious or unconscious? free or bound? physical or intellectual? You answer, "I do not know." Then God with you is a word—mere word—and the result of your endeavour to interpret the good old cumbrous word is to leave it void, utterly void, of sense and meaning.

The whole ends in silence. The latest achievement of the critical school is to put a padlock on "the door of our lips." (Ps. cxli, 3.) Were care and caution meant, as in the Psalmist's prayer,

"Set a watch, O Jehovah, before my mouth;
Keep the door of my lips,"

we should listen acquiescently, and be thankful for the lesson. But when you wish to gag me, my love of freedom rebels, and at least the voice of prayer will burst forth from my heart, conscious of God's benign presence, and say:—

"O Jehovah, I cry unto thee,
Give ear unto my voice;
Let my prayer be directed to thee as incense,
And the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

The term conscious, the term free, must not be applied to God. Yet, strange to say, something else may be used of God, at least in the way of question. The utterance on which I have just inadvertently adds these words: "Does the conscious particle which returns into him preserve its consciousness?" Mark the philosophic reserve. A question is asked, merely a question. Who can object? When a question is meant to insinuate a theory I object. On a subject so solemn, so big with consequences, I demand explicitness; in the name of my fellow men I demand explicitness; and on behalf of those who are unborn in metaphysics I emphatically demand explicitness. The critic, you say, has sovereign rights. He has no rights but such as are compatible with the public good, and the public good demands explicitness. The Ulysses policy of *spargere voces in vulgum ambiguas* (scattering among the people words of doubtful import) is a wrong to society which no human being can rightfully exercise.

And now let us look at the theory thus conveyed in an innuendo. The implications are these:—

The absolute being, coming to consciousness in the individual, ceases to be conscious when the individual ceases to exist, but recovers consciousness in another individual, and so for ever flows and ebbs, ebbs and flows the tide of divine and human life; yet subject to a question, "Does the conscious particle which returns into God, as coming to consciousness in man, preserve its consciousness?" In other words, does God die when the individual dies? On this point Renan avoids dogmatising; this is one of his "refined formulas" which are gradually to supersede the good, old, cumbrous, materialistic words. Of a truth the words must be materialistic and cumbrous too if they involve any thing so thoroughly and characteristically material and mortal as dying or ceasing to be conscious.

In order that the whole and each part may be distinctly seen and contemplated, I put the insinuated theory in this form:—

The absolute being—	{	was conscious (in an individual man). ceases to be conscious. becomes again conscious (in another individual) but possibly does not retain "the conscious particle."
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Mark, it is a "conscious particle" that is spoken of. A particle, a particle and nothing more; not a whole, but a particle. *The great whole*, then, can at the best have only "a conscious particle." In other words, the underlying substance of things, that is, everything but individual life, is unconscious in itself, and has con-

sciousness only in man. It follows that "the absolute being" is dead, unintelligent, inert matter, which some way or other becomes conscious in becoming individual. Ceasing to be individual, does it retain or recover consciousness? Common sense says "no," for it never in itself had any, not even a particle. The consciousness belongs to the individual, and that consciousness, as every one knows, is consciousness of individual existence—individual, not universal—human, not divine. Truly does Renan utter his own thought when he asserts that "there is nothing above man."

A greater divine and a better philosopher than our critic has spoken of God and man in these elevated terms:—

"The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality; whom no man hath seen or can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting."—1 Tim. vi., 15, 16.

Which of these two views does human nature avouch? which of the two will the reader make his own? And let him make his choice in full knowledge of the cause he has in hand. Had not Renan's fatalism been undergoing infiltration into the veins of British Christianity this volume would never have been written. The uninitiated hear his doctrines, and, dazzled by his brilliance, and misled by his apparently religious phraseology, become fascinated first, and then are taken captive by a system of philosophy which is the opposite, the denial, as well as the negation, of the religion of Jesus. The pulpit and the press are here and there doing in a small way the very work which Renan does on the wide area of western and eastern civilisation. On this point I say more in the preface to this volume.

With such opinions Renan may well pronounce the system of the universe inexplicable:—

"Philosophy has never proposed more than two hypotheses to explain the system of the universe: on one side—God, free, personal, having attributes by which He is determined, providence, causality of the universe referred to God, human soul substantial and immortal; on the other—matter eternal, evolution of the germ by its latent force, God undetermined, laws, nature, necessity, reason, impersonality of the intelligence, emersion and absorption of the individual. The first hypothesis rests on too exalted an idea of individuality; the second on a too exclusive view of the great whole."—"Averroes," p. 108.

I will put these two hypotheses side by side, each under its proper heading:—

TOO EXALTED AN IDEA OF
INDIVIDUALITY.

God is free,
personal,
has determining attributes,
is the cause of the universe,
Man's soul is substantial,
immortal.

TOO EXCLUSIVE VIEW OF THE
GREAT WHOLE.

Matter is eternal.
The germ evolves by its latent force.
God has no determining attributes.
Instead of God, laws,
Nature, necessity, reason,
Impersonal intelligence, the individual
emerges and is re-absorbed.

these are the only theories, and of these neither is true ; for one is too individual, and the other is not individual enough. If hypotheses being eliminated nothing remains. It follows the universe is an impenetrable enigma to philosophy. Why, then, philosophise ? Our critic has abandoned his position as a philosopher by avowing his impotence. If philosophy fails here it fails altogether. It has no mission, for it secures no positive result, nor has it even a hope of doing so. No longer is it useful for mental gymnastics. Men do not toil except for a reward. Labour and get no benefit is tread-mill work to which no generous soul will condescend. Did all who cultivate philosophy find it to be as sterile as Renan, philosophical investigations would speedily come to an end. If others labour to find a *tertium quid*, a medium hypothesis, which shall reconcile the only one now existing, they labour for a worthy end, and may prolong a culture to which they are devoted. Nor will their chance of success be diminished if they take revelation as their substance, and employ philosophy to keep its teachings free from corruption ; and to mould them into artistic shape. Yet, probably the danger is greater than the promise ; nor is it likely that any religion can be attained superior to the scriptural doctrine of *the living Father of the universe*. None the less do I desire that philosophy should be prosecuted in full freedom and with full encouragement, and the greatest encouragement it can receive is the impulse that would arise from a belief in early or greater or less, success.

The futility of inquiries that lead to nothing is described by Renan, notwithstanding his averment that the perfection of philosophy is to abstain from conclusions :—

superior minds throw themselves on the cloud where they think God is, and when they have found it empty, they burst forth in reproaches, sometimes in blasphemies, against the shadow by which they have been deceived—blasphemies excusable, no doubt, since they proceed from a love of truth and are only one kind of adoration.”—“*Essais*,” p. 202.

This is one of the most painful passages our critic ever wrote. According to it, what is God ? A cloud. And what the reward to superior minds in their labours ? To find the cloud empty. What the result of their disappointment ? Reproaches, even blasphemies—against whom ? “The shadow by which they have been deceived.” Yet these blasphemies are excusable—why ? Because they are uttered by men who love truth,—nay, because they are only one kind of adoration. It is generally held that the love of truth is the love of God, who is truth ; and the soul that loves God can never blaspheme him, sore as its disappointment may be. Here the arrogance of the speculator is made manifest, rather than the docility of the child, or the veneration of the worshipper. Yet, while the whole attitude of the inquirer is one of demand, desert, and dissatisfaction, his act is char-

acterised as "adoration." Pitiably abuse of words, more pitiable the attitude. He who approaches "the problem of the universe" in this spirit will be repaid with refusal and rejection. Our modern Titans will succeed as little as did the ancient in taking heaven by storm. These "superior minds" may learn a useful lesson from the first hand labourer they meet with, who is content to worship God without attempting to define him, and finds in the loving and reverent service of his Heavenly Father the satisfaction of the deepest cravings of his nature, and the invigoration of its highest aspirations.

But my eye has fallen on passages which look less unpromising. I discern the words "God is," and I eagerly read on. Having done so, I translate the sentence: "God is the idea of the universe, and the universe is the reality of God."—"La Revue," p. 386.

The words puzzle me, let me reflect. "God is the idea of the universe"—what does that mean? Let me seek aid from an instance. My thought of you is the idea of you—is this what is meant? If so, then you are the occasion of my thought, and my idea is a reflex image of yourself. Consequently the universe creates God, and God reflects the universe. But this is rank materialism. The universe then is God, and God is the creation of the universe. I am not sure that this is not what is meant, for the second member of the sentence tells me that "the universe is the reality of God." Had it been said that the universe is really God, I should have been clear as to the sense. As it is, I leave the enigma to others.

And yet I do so with a rebellious spirit, for in the same connection I find myself implicitly rebuked for what I had thought an act of humility. The master throws in my teeth—"the instinctive horror of all great minds for the formulas which tend to make God something" (Ibid., p. 389), so that my only resource is to settle down in the conclusion that God is nothing—any way, nothing that I can know.

My curiosity is again excited.

THE REAL GOD IS THE UNIVERSE.

"A perfect God or a real God? Theology must choose the one or the other. A perfect God is only an ideal; as to a real God, He lives, He develops himself in the immensity of space and the eternity of time, He appears to us under the infinite variety of the forms which manifest him: it is the cosmos, the universe. With his imperfections and his defects He is still very grand and very beautiful God for those who understand him, see him and contemplate him with the eyes of science and philosophy. So far as we are concerned, the world being nothing less than being itself, in the series of its manifestations through space and time, possesses infinity, necessity, independence, universality, and all the metaphysical attributes which theologians restrict exclusively to God. It is, then, clear that as to existence it suffices to itself, to its movement, to its organisation, and to its conservation, and has no need of a hypercosmic principle. Now the moment that God is no longer conceived as the substance or the cause of the world, it is no longer absurd to

make him nothing more than the supreme ideal of universal life. This, in my opinion, is the sole conception which saves theology from the two rocks against which it dashes by turns—creation out of nothing and pantheism.

“These are very ingenious formulas, and very rich in truth.”—“*La Revue*,” p. 386.

I had before suspected that Renan's God was the universe, and here I find the fact explicitly avowed. It is “the cosmos, the universe.” Is this God perfect? There is no perfect God, for “a perfect God is only an ideal.” Renan's God, though “a very grand and very beautiful God,” has “imperfections and defects.” Indeed, “he develops himself;” being not the cause of the world, but the world in manifestation, and “the supreme ideal of universal life.”

“A perfect God is only an ideal.” An ideal then is something opposite to a reality. Consequently “the supreme ideal” is opposite to a reality. It follows that what Renan has previously called “the absolute” is the opposite to a reality. He had, then, some ground for asserting that “logic leads to the abysses.”

“Inconsistency is an essential element in all superior things. Logic leads to the abysses. Who can fathom the indiscernible mystery of his own consciousness, and in the great chaos of human life, what reason knows exactly where stop its chances of seeing clearly, and its right to make an affirmation?” “*Averroes*,” p. 179.

What “the abysses” are does not appear, except that an abyss is in its nature something dark, dismal, and fathomless. Truth has been sought at the bottom of a well, but to expect to find it in an abyss is pure folly. Accordingly we are not to think of making an affirmation even of our own consciousness. Human life is a chaos, and in that chaos there is small chance of seeing anything clearly whether human or divine. Nay, there can be nothing clear or certain where inconsistency is an essential element.

We have just heard of the abysses without being very sure of the meaning of the word. Another passage from Renan's pen makes “the abyss our Father.” What connection there may be between the abysses to which logic leads and “the abyss our Father” we know not and cannot conjecture. The only clear statement is that, being “the spawns of a moment on the surface of an ocean of beings, we feel in ourselves a mysterious affinity with the abyss our Father.” The statement, if clear, is not true. Man does not feel affinity with an abyss, nor with a Father that is an abyss. All such notions are painful and repugnant to his inmost nature. We cite the passage in full :—

“The more I advance in life the more I am engaged in the sole problem which has always its own profound import and its seducing novelty. An infinity overflows and besets us. The spawns of a moment on the surface of an ocean of beings, we feel in ourselves a mysterious affinity with the abyss our Father.”—“*Explications*,” p. 28.

Again and again has Renan declared against every attempt to describe or define God; again and again has he broken his own law; the transgression, however, leaves us as much in the dark as the prohibition. What man is he tells us in a phrase more clear than complimentary, but what is God?

"What is God in regard to humanity, if not the transcendent sum total of man's supra-sensible wants, the category of the ideal? that is, the form under which we conceive the ideal, as space and time are the categories of bodies; that is, the forms under which we conceive of bodies."—"La Liberté," vi., p. 348.

What does all this mean? It has ever been a practice with me, when puzzled with theological, religious, or metaphysical knots, to look within myself, and see if I can find in any analogy of my own inner nature a pick to undo or even a sword to cut them. I will repeat the experiment.

"God is the transcendent sum total of my supra-sensible wants." What are they? I confess I am not sure what they are. Is faith one of them? obedience? humility? These are wants toward God—are they "supra-sensible"? Supra-sensible human wants must on one side be human; can any number of human things make up God? Can wants even form part of God? The sum total of finite qualities does not form the infinite. If God consists of the sum total of any or all human wants is he really God? And if this is Renan's God can he be acknowledged as "the living and true God."

This cloudy phrase is explained by one more cloudy—"that is the form under which we conceive the ideal"—from which, if we learn anything, we learn that God is not so much the ideal even as a form not of the ideal, but of man's conception of the ideal. Under this cloud of words God himself vanishes.

This form is also a category. And what is a category but a class? and what a class but an abstract term? We are still in the human, and have not approached the divine itself.

The whole is subjective—what is the object? Is there any object? This, the real point at issue, escapes from our inquiry.

In another part, however, an object is presented. It is here —

"Beyond nature and man is there, you ask me, anything? There is everything, I reply. Nature is only an appearance; man is only a phenomenon. There is the eternal foundation, there is the infinite, the substance, the absolute, the ideal. . . . Here is the Father out of whose bosom all comes, and into whose bosom all returns."—"Lettre à M. Geroult."

Beyond nature and man there is everything—"there is the eternal foundation." This looks satisfactory; an eternal foundation is the great want of humanity. But then the foundation must live, must be free, conscious, and benignant, must in a word be the great "Father of all." This is the Being whom nature reveals, Christ proclaims, and the heart asks for and accepts. Is

this Renan's "eternal foundation"? No; his eternal foundation is "the Father out of whose bosom all comes, and into whose bosom all returns." With this "Father" we are already acquainted under the name of "the abyss, our Father," out of whose bosom we human beings were spawned, and this, it is to be presumed, is the same bosom on which his deceased sister lies, for into that bosom "all returns."

Something of the same kind seems darkly declared in this "profound truth":—

"The profound truth remains, namely, the identity of the permanent bottom of things, the eternity of the ocean of being, on the surface of which unroll the always oscillating and variable lines of individuality."—"Averroes," p. 115.

Figures of speech again! and what figures! "The eternal foundation," and "the permanent bottom of things," are phrases which may go together; but certainly the bottom of an ocean can never be the ocean of which it is the bottom. Besides pendulums oscillate and not waves; and if they did oscillate they would not unroll; nor do waves unroll at all; equally unfit are lines for unrolling. However, these incompatible things are said of individuality, while that in its turn is predicated of the surface of an ocean. The lines of individuality which unroll on the surface of an ocean! We speak with diffidence, but we suppose that Renan's ocean is God, and his lines of individuality man. He appears then to declare that God unrolls himself in individual men in whom he comes into real existence, being conscious, personal, and free, and out of whom he passes back into his own condition, which is not real, nor conscious, nor personal, nor free. This view finds confirmation as well in what has gone before as in this:—

"The infinite exists only when it puts on a finite form."—"La Revue," p. 384.

The only existing infinite is an infinite which becomes finite, consequently there is no proper infinite. Equally is there no creation, but merely transition. All things, the infinite no less than the finite, the substance as well as the form, pass to and fro, vibrating between the two limits of individual life and general death. Not only material forces and objects are in constant efflux and reflux, but intellectual and moral ones, even those of the highest kind, for

"The absolute of justice and reason manifests itself only in humanity; viewed out of the race that absolute is only an abstraction; viewed in humanity it is a reality."

If anything can be called God it is the absolute of justice and reason. Hence it follows that

God out of man is an abstraction.

God in man is a reality.

Thus God depends for his reality on man ; before man appeared there was no real God ; when man shall have passed away God will cease to exist. In all worlds and all states of existence, where man is not, God is only an abstraction.

In the midst of this yes and no ; these doubts and denials, in which uncertainty is alone certain, the positive, the definite, the true, the absolute, escape from our hands and leave us floating on ceaseless and endless successions, fleet and illusory as the clouds. This general incertitude has revolutionised the whole circle of knowledge, which in future is simply a record of passing phenomena. Robbed of God, we are left without truth, either to desire, to pursue, or to hold. Such is Renan's conclusion, as set forth in one of his most recent publications :—

"We must ask of the past only the past itself. Political history has been ennobled since men have ceased to seek in it lessons of practical wisdom or morality. In the same way the interest of philosophical history resides less perhaps in the positive information you may draw from it, than in the picture it gives of the successive evolutions of the human mind. The characteristic feature of the nineteenth century is the substitution of the historical method for the dogmatical in all studies relative to the human mind. Literary criticism is no longer anything but an exposition of the diverse forms of beauty, that is, the ways in which the different families and the different ages of humanity have resolved the esthetic problem. Philosophy is only a picture of the solution proposed to resolve the philosophic problem. Theology must cease to be anything, except a history of the spontaneous effort made to resolve the divine problem. In effect history is the necessary form of the science of everything which is subject to the laws of change and successive life. The science of language is the history of languages ; the science of literature and philosophy is the history of literature and philosophies ; the science of the human mind is, in the same way, the history of the human mind, and not merely the analysis of the mechanism of the individual soul. Psychology contemplates the individual, and it contemplates the individual in an abstract, absolute manner as a permanent and identical subject ; in the eyes of criticism consciousness is formed in humanity as well as in the individual ; it has its history. The great result of critical progress has been the substitution of the category of becoming for the category of being, the conception of the relative for the conception of the absolute, movement for immovability. Formerly everything was conceived as being ; men spoke of philosophy, right, politics, art, poetry, in an absolute manner ; now all is considered as about to be."—"Averroes," Pref. vi., vii.

Thus God being conducted out of the universe is followed by all reality. Since we cannot declare simply that God is, we are unable to make the avowal of ourselves, our progenitors, or our successors. The universe is a shadowy succession of phantasmagoria. Human life, without sap or substance, is a superficial and evanescent form. Religion is an everlasting series of senseless shows and worships, the babblements and mumblings of a self-deluded and perishing race. And so the curtain falls, leaving the players behind to lay aside their masks, and the spectators before to vanish into darkness, until the masquerade shall be resumed tomorrow, fated to end, like its predecessors, in a momentary glare and in permanent shadows.

In a world of universal transition, where all is in movement and nothing stable, there can be no God, for there is no fixed point, no unchanging centre ; but the great whole is a living thing which, possessing no common *sensorium*, has neither clear beginning nor definite end, but ebbs and flows in this manner or in that until new impulses produce new but alike transitional results. It is a watch without a spring. It is a steam engine extemporised to run on a line equally extemporised, because wanted by man, and which will continue to run until its fires go out, when it will pass away to be succeeded by other spontaneously produced machines,—for how long no one knows.

Meanwhile theology is no more ; metaphysics are at an end ; and the philosophy of transition reigns supreme and alone in a world of universal doubt, having swept and garnished the old house, and driven away the household gods. The temple is then empty. The ancient oracles are dumb. Altars the most sacred and venerable lie in ruins. The cloud-capt temple itself has vanished into thin air at the word of a magician equally potent and pitiless. With the dictum of Occam, however, we fully agree. "Without sufficient grounds beings must not be multiplied." But in any sound *rationale* of the universe you must have at work a being capable and sufficient for its actual tasks. This self-evident truth "puts to flight" the films of Renan's idealistic naturalism, demanding in their stead a God which will satisfy our human heart, correspond to our human ideals, and prove equal to the labour of creating, preserving, governing, and blessing the great all of being, whether of matter or mind.

We have been occupied with an attempt to learn what idea of God, if any, Renan proposes to substitute for the idea recognised by the highest spiritual philosophy. If the result is unsatisfactory, leaving us now in doubt, and now in darkness, the reason is that the critic is at a loss for any sure and steadfast basis on which to raise his possible construction. Passing in review the principal grounds of belief in God, he successively questions or condemns them, so as at last to come to the conclusion that where nothing is knowable, nothing is or can be known.

He begins with nature :—

"Were there nothing but nature, we might ask whether God were necessary."—"Opinion Nationale," 4th Sept., 1862.

In other words, it is a question if order, regularity, beauty, power, steadfastness the most signal and sublime, denote the presence and operations of intelligence, or are the results of a something which, being destitute of consciousness, freedom, and power of self-determination, may be justly described as dead, being deaf, dumb, blind, and insensible.

What is here a scepticism is in the next quotation a denial, for nature does not reveal God :—

"Far from revealing God, nature is immoral; good and evil are indifferent to it. Never did an avalanche come to a stand in order not to crush a worthy man; the sun has not grown pale before any crime; the earth drinks the blood of the just and the unjust. In the same way history is a permanent scandal in a moral point of view."—"La Revue," p. 387.

The denial is of the most positive kind. It is also put in the most offensive manner. Nature, instead of declaring God's being and providence, is on the contrary immoral, and history, the theatre on which God would act, were there a God, "is a permanent scandal in a moral point of view."

The mingling together here of heterogeneous things, such as nature, morals, and history, is one out of many instances of looseness of thought and rhetorical dexterity which manifest the absence of that thorough, logical, and ethical training which is the sole condition of success in these abstract and momentous questions. But what, we ask, is meant by nature? Is nature the totality of the physical world, the world which is visible and palpable? If so, what is the meaning of declaring it immoral? Is an avalanche capable of virtue? Does the sun know right from wrong? Does the earth really drink, and drink blood, like a savage revelling over his slaughtered foe? If not, is the earth blameworthy for what it does? Is it "immoral?"

In truth, not nature but "nature's God" is here meant to be assailed. Well, you prove rather than disprove the existence of a being by representing him as reckless and cruel. Nor do you exclude God from history by blaspheming him. Bacon has said that it is less condemnable to deny God's existence than to paint him in dark and repulsive colours. The possibility of such impiety can be found only in a mind destitute of reverence and worship. What a striking and painful illustration have we in this paragraph of the unfitness of Renan for handling religious subjects.

The God against whom this stone is hurled is "the only living and true God," who, however, is in Renan's mind dethroned by another, bearing the name of nature—the one exclusive sovereign of the great whole.

"There are not many worlds, nor different orders of power. The universe is one—one in all its constituents and moving powers."—*Ut supra*.

Matter and mind, the inner and the outer world, here and hereafter, may be sometimes presented in contradistinction broader than facts may justify. But the existence of differences cannot be denied. The desk I write upon, and the pen I write with are not the same as my intellect; nor are logical processes identical with ethical and devotional ones; nor can you extinguish man's "longing after immortality" by telling him that the world beyond the tomb differs not from the world on this side the grave.

But the true question is not so much whether monism or dualism is the right philosophical solution of the problem of the universe, as whether the actual unity does not of necessity implicate the

action, and as the action, so the existence of mind. And here we venture to declare that throughout this all-pervading and all-embracing unity there is not the smallest organism nor the least considerable process but is inexplicable, except on the admission of mental causation not essentially dissimilar to our own. Then, the very existence of the unity indicates one and only one at the centre of all. You admit this? No, your unity is unity of substance, not unity of thought. The real unity is the unity of the Supreme Mind, going forth in countless manifestations, all the diversities of which are only diversely coloured radiations of the one central sun. The universal unity implies a universal intelligence—at least if analogy has any force. Whence the unity of a book but from the one mind by which it was produced. The unity of an oratorio is the product of the one mind whose thoughts and fancies are made audible by a thousand other minds. All unities which the human mind can clearly trace back to their origin have that origin in unity of thought. In other words, every department of the social world is one in the degree in which it is the expression of one mind and one thought. The source of each constituent element being ascertained, the source of the whole is known. The law of the association of ideas transfers the process and the conclusion to other worlds and other departments of other worlds, until it leads us to say, "As here, so there" mind is the author, sustainer, ruler, and benefactor. This it says and will continue to say in spite of all attempts to make it say otherwise. Human nature is too strong for speculation. Nor can speculation invalidate the logic of the process. It is as unreasonable to affirm that trees produce the birds which lodge in their branches, as it is to declare that stones thrown over a human being's head become human beings themselves. No cause but what is sufficient is the true cause. What then are we to think of a cause of all which is devoid of mental and moral qualities?

But is Renan sure that his universe is the entire universe? Does the solar system exhaust the category of realities? May there not be worlds within or beyond "this visible diurnal sphere?" May there not be regions where matter is less prevalent, and mind more so? or where mind excludes all but the most aerial of organisms? The world of thought is even here the great reality, for it subdues and directs every other thing; then may not its rule be not only supreme, but sole and alone? And does anyone pretend to say that now the movements of mind and heart are strictly homogeneous with the movements of the brook, the river, the cloud, the planet? If not, what is gained by pleading that the universe is homogeneous, and by the bold assertion that "physical laws are the only laws?"

"Newton's mechanical hypothesis has so thoroughly changed our ideas of the system of the universe, that all the conceptions of antiquity, of the middle ages, and even of Descartes himself on "The World," appear to-day as the

dreams of another age. The homogeneity of the universe was then badly understood; men could not suppose that one and the same system extended to all parts of the world, and that the law which here determines the movement of an atom presided over the revolutions of the heavenly bodies."—"Averroes," 120.

The universe is homogeneous. The statement can be justified only by the experience of one who has visited all parts of God's creation, or one who, arguing *a priori*, establishes universal propositions. Our critic is neither in that position nor this. With him seeing is believing, and his seeing, wide though it is as compared with the range of ordinary eyes, leaves all but a small segment of the universe uninspected.

Let us, however, grant his averment. Then the question arises What is this one all-pervading force? If, as far as we know, mind is the sovereign power, then the alleged homogeneousness is that of mind. Mental and moral power, not ponderosity, is the universal master and ruler. Yet we are told that the law of gravity "presides over the revolutions of the heavenly bodies." Let it be so, and still your conclusion embraces only one province of the universe. What of the rest? You *know* nothing, and should say nothing. But were you able to declare the law of gravity absolutely universal, you would only establish the universality of thought. Law is but the utterance of mind. Properly it is mind exercising its prerogatives by the medium of its will. The law of a well-regulated home is the realised will of its mistress. And what really is this law of gravity, by which, as you say, Newton has changed the system of the universe? It is Newton's conception of that system set forth in words. Here again you are involved in the meshes of mind, from which, indeed, you can never escape. Take an illustration in the excellent definition of nature, given by the great naturalist Buffon:—"Nature is the system of laws established by the Creator for the existence and succession of beings."

From this definition Renan omits the great and essential factor of mind. The law-giver he disowns, and so leaves a "mechanical" system of the universe. Here the critic makes a slight error. Machines do not make themselves. Machines do not make other machines. A mechanical system owes its mechanism to an agent standing on its outside. And so your metaphor does nothing but cut your own fingers.

Newton's philosophy is appealed to. Materialism is its natural result. Was this the opinion of Newton himself? We do not presume much when we think that that great astronomer and devout worshipper was as competent as any other to see truly and to declare clearly what was the religious bearing of his great discoveries.

In this conviction we shall state his views. With him the universe is but an effect. It is, moreover, an effect which shows forth its cause, and the very object and end of what is called

natural philosophy is to lead the mind of the student "from nature up to nature's God."

"This in truth is the principle, the office, and the end of natural philosophy, namely, to argue from phenomena and without fictitious hypothesis, so as to proceed with the aid of reason from effects to causes, until we come to the Primal Cause, *which, without doubt, is NOT MECHANICAL.*"—"Optics," iii. 28.

Who could have expected so decided an utterance in favour of a spiritual first cause immediately after reading or hearing Renan's statement that Newton's mechanical hypothesis has changed the conceptions of Descartes into dreams? Newton's "mechanical hypothesis" is not mechanical in regard to the question of God but the very reverse; it is not atheistic, it is emphatically theistic.

I transcribe the remainder of the passage—which could not have been more express and emphatic had it been written in order to contradict atheistic views:—

"Natural philosophy has it also for its main business to resolve these and such like questions. What is there in places almost empty of matter, and whence is it that the sun and planets gravitate toward one another without dense matter between them? Whence is it that nature doth nothing in vain, and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world? To what end are comets, and whence is it that planets move all one and the same way in orbs concentric, while comets move all manner of ways in orbs very eccentric; and what hinders the fixed stars from falling one upon another? How came the bodies of animals to be contrived with so much art? and for what end are their several parts? Was the eye contrived without skill in optics, and the ear without knowledge of sound? How do the motions of body follow from the will, and whence is the instinct in animals? Is not the sensory of animals that place to which the sensitive substance is present; and into which the sensible species of things are carried through the nerves and brain that they may be perceived by their immediate presence to that substance? Does it not appear from phenomena that there is a being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent, who, in infinite space, as it were, in his sensorium, sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly by their immediate presence to himself; and which things, the images only, carried through the organs of sense into our little sensoriums, are there seen and beheld by that which in us perceives and thinks, and though every true step made in this philosophy brings us not immediately to the knowledge of the First Cause, yet it brings us nearer to it, and on that account is to be highly valued."

In two other passages of his "Optics" the great astronomer asks and answers questions in such a way as to leave no doubt whatever of his acknowledgment of God:—

"Whence that splendour which lights up the universe? For what purpose were the comets created? Whence comes it that the movement of all the planets proceeds in the same way? What prevents the fixed stars from precipitating themselves the one on the other? How have the bodies of animals been constructed so skilfully? . . . The origin of all these things can be ascribed to nothing but the intelligence and the wisdom of a powerful Being, always existing, present everywhere, who has ordered all the parts of the universe according to his will, much better than our soul can by its will move the members of the body which are under its control."—"Optics," lib. iii. quest. 31, 38.

Sir Isaac even denies the sufficiency of mechanical or physical causes, which with him are no causes at all, but mere phenomena :—

"The celestial bodies will continue in their circular movement by the laws of gravitation ; but in their origin they could not receive from those laws the regular place of their orbits. This beautiful co-ordination of the sun, the planets, and the comets could not be formed except by the rule of a powerful and intelligent being, and if the fixed stars are the centres of similar systems, all those systems constructed with similar wisdom are necessarily subject to the action of one single master. He rules all, not as the soul of the world, but as the sovereign of all, and in virtue of that sovereignty he is ordinarily called *The Almighty*.—"*Philos. Nat. Principia*."

The sublime being thus spoken of, "we know," says Newton, "by his attributes, by his wise and excellent administration of the universe, and by final causes."—"Princip. Schol. Gener."

And what do we know of him ?

"God is the eternal, infinite, supremely perfect master of all things. It is specially by his being master of all things that we conceive of God. As he is the universal sovereign, he is the true and living God, intelligent, possessed of omniscience and omnipotence. . . . God is always and every where, without ceasing to be one and the same, the only God. There are successive parts in duration, co-existing parts in space, but nothing of the kind in the human person, that is in the principle which in each of us is endowed with thought, and much less in that thinking substance which is God. It is confessed that God exists necessarily. In virtue of that same necessity he is every where and always. Hence it follows that he is altogether identical—all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all thinking force, intelligent, acting, not like man, but in a way which has in it nothing bodily, and altogether unknown to us."—*Ut supra*.

"He is not eternity and infinity, but eternal and infinite ; he is not duration and space, but he endures always, and he is present everywhere, and by being always and everywhere he constitutes duration and space."—*Ut supra*.

To such an extent does Newton include a providence in his idea of God that he affirms :—

"God without rule, providence, and final causes, is nothing else than fate and nature."—*Ut supra*.

The God, then, that Newton owned is not a substance-god like that of Spinoza, but a providence-God, or a God who is providence ; that is, he exercises a moral sovereignty in the universe. Hence, God is in history, and history is an unfolding of God. God is in nature and God in history suppose man God's child, time man's school, and eternity man's home. Newton's philosophy, consequently, is religious instead of being "mechanical." The mechanical philosophy we find, then, when fate and nature only are acknowledged as ruling in the universe and over man. This is the philosophy of Renan.

Disowning God in nature, our philosopher may possibly find God in experience. Do you not feel yourself under the pressure of a hand far mightier than yourself? Is not your path now blocked up, now opened before you, no less acceptably than

unexpectedly? So long as you obey the laws of the universe do you not find all things to work together for good, as if they were the forces of an infinitely wise and benignant will? When you look back on the past do you not trace the pointing finger and the guiding hand of an Almighty Father? What is your present condition but the combined result of your own ceaseless endeavour, and of an all-controlling power, whose influence may be invisible, but is neither unfelt nor unrecognised? Indeed, the great testimony of human life declares the ever present deity. Clearly a higher power than our own "shapes our ends," determines our means, and works out our destiny. Else whence the happiness of individual life? whence the harmony of home? whence the perpetuation of human society? The mutually repellent powers of our daily existence are numerous and mighty, yet on the whole they issue in the production of varied and immeasurable good. What overrules them? What brings them into harmony? What sustains their action? And in the outer world whence the manifest unity? and the continued operation? and the ceaseless recurrence? Whence the alternation of day and night? the return of the seasons? the universal correlation of forces, and their universal balance? It is the idlest of dreams to suppose that these are the results of blind law, of material tendencies. The theory is contradicted by analogies found on all sides and repeated every age.

Yet Renan declares that "*to ask God from experience is self-deception.*" Why? Is there not harmony in nature? Yes; but then the harmony comes from "flexibility of accommodation;" "each being puts itself into equilibrium with its external condition."—"La Revue," p. 388.) Let it be so; then the fact is only another reason for acknowledging God, for flexibility, if not a mere abstraction meaning nothing, denotes the immanent and accommodating energy of the Almighty Intelligence. Blind powers are no powers at all. What more absurd, what so contrary to experience, as that the need of fins should create fins, or that ears, with all their organisms and adaptations, should start into existence when and where they are wanted? What! are the Arabian Nights a book of natural philosophy? or Ovid's Metamorphoses a natural history? Renan often demands that alleged miracles should be subjected to the scrutiny of a board of men of science. What he demands of others he surely has done himself. Let him, then, inform the world where it may look for the scientific report which exhibits the workings of this new law of "flexibility of accommodation." Full of marvels it must be. There it is told how, when legs are wanted, legs protrude, that if a leg is too long it shortens of itself; if too short, it lengthens by some innate force; if too small, it swells at the wish of the wearer; and if too large, it contracts when bidden. Surely here are miracles which put ordinary miracles to the blush.

"Like nature history reveals laws ; but not more than nature does it reveal a plan traced beforehand. Doubtless there is harmony in nature ; otherwise it would not exist ; but there is no such thing as choice. All the theories which supposed intentional laws in the configuration of continents, the distances of planets, are false."—"La Revue," p. 388.

The last sentence may be true without contributing anything toward the establishment of the thesis that history does not reveal God ; for what have the distances of planets or the configuration of continents to do with history. History is man's past, called into mental existence by man's imagination working on actual facts ; whereas planets and continents in all their varieties and modifications belong not to human society, but to external nature.

However, "history reveals laws." To whom? To the cloth-hopper? No ; to the philosopher. Does the philosopher see them with his bodily eyes? No ; with his mental vision. In other words, he deduces them from classified phenomena? Yes. But law is an abstract term, what do you mean thereby? If law is a real thing, what is it? A force? an energy? a tendency? But these again are mere abstractions and tell me nothing. Does a force, an energy, a tendency, earn your daily bread? build your houses? plough your fields? O no ; houses are built and fields are ploughed by men. That is, by minds and wills? Yes. Then effective force denotes the presence of a mind, of a will—say, in a machine shop or a rope yard? Yes. So that if you see a forcing-pump at work you acknowledge a maker of that piece of mechanism? Of course. Do you ascribe the machine to law? I am not so foolish. Then what shall we say of the philosopher who is content to rest in law as the Creator of the universe? The same mental culture which sees law in the hydraulic press, and hence acknowledges its maker, has only to continue its course to proceed from every law to its personal source, and from the laws of the universe to the one Universal Lawgiver. You reply, there is "no choice," "no plan traced beforehand"—what, not in that orrery? O, yes ; certainly, there ; but not in the mechanism of the universe. And if in the one, why not in the other? "How do you know there is a previously traced plan in this edifice?" Who ever knew a house built without a plan? If a plan is necessary to a house of brick and mortar, is it not implied in the house "not built with hands," which occupies and fills all space? "But not a previously traced plan." Did you ever know of a house built without a plan? No. But a house built first, and its plan traced afterwards, is simply a house built without a plan. Hence, the plan precedes the house, and the house comes forth from the plan. Even so in the universe, which is nothing more than an embodiment of the divine thought or the realisation of the divine plan.

The word plan, nay, the word law, implicates mind ; since

without mind neither a plan nor a law is known to exist. The mind thus implicated involves a cause. Hence, laws presuppose causes. He, then, that acknowledges laws, acknowledges mental causes—if, indeed, to speak of mental causes is not tautological, for mind is the only cause known to man. It follows that mind and not matter is the universal cause. If you conceive of matter as mind manifested, the position is self-evident; and, so far as you make a distinction between the two, the distinction is and must be of such a nature as to deny causation to matter and to ascribe it to mind. The fact is one of the deepest utterances of our common human nature. There is, consequently, but one force and one law in the universe, and that force and that law is intelligence. This universal intelligence, considered in its concentration, is called God, and considered in its diffusion, may be called the universe. Hence, God and the universe co-exist and interpenetrate each other. What is termed matter is mind in varied manifestation; and what is termed mind is matter in its essence and source. It follows that the great all is one,—one intelligence whose centre and circumference is God, and whose radiations are man and nature in all their boundless multiplicity.

Entertaining these views I could accept what ensues as a theistical truth :—

“The history of humanity is for me a vast whole, in which all is essentially different and unequal, but of the same order, proceeds from the same causes, obeys the same laws.”—“*Etudes* :” Pref. xii.

But does Renan mean to acknowledge God in these words? I know not; yet, if the causes and laws of which he speaks are not mental forces and operations, they are no causes and no laws at all, and, such being the case, the one “order” which he acknowledges as universal is an order which excludes God from “the history of humanity.”

We have asked Renan for God, and as yet have gained nothing in reply. Criticism, guilty of high treason against gods and men, attacks the God of the past. Logic leads to the abysses. Nature, far from revealing God, is immoral. The universe is the dwelling place of physical, that is, the only known laws; the problem of the universe resolves itself into poems. To ask God from experience is self-deception. History does not reveal God.

These are the answers we have received. They are all negations. So far as they go, they leave us without God. Indeed, man is here totally helpless; he has no instrument whatever by which to discover the Creator, for, *in regard to God*, even mental philosophy is barren.

“If it is declared that there is a primary science, containing the principles of all others, a science which, by itself and by abstract combinations, can lead us to the truth touching God, the world, man, I see no necessity for such a category of human knowledge. * * * Metaphysics, the oldest of the sciences, leads to no real discoveries.”—“*Revue*,” *ut supra*.

Thus bereft of philosophy we appeal to revelation? No.

"The God of the Hebrews is a capricious and impenetrable sovereign, a hostile force against which the alternatives of submission and revolt are equally justified. Thence a sublime lamentation. The poem of Job is the sublime expression of this cry of the soul."—"Job," "Etudes," lxii., seq.

The Book of Job is but one out of a collection of thirty-nine books. No logic will justify you in saying that of thirty-nine books when your evidence is restricted to one. Let Job be what it may, the book cannot be accepted as the description of "the God of the Hebrews." In reality, however, you declare the book to be no picture of Hebrew thought or life. The contradiction is here so flagrant that I must give your own words:—

"The atmosphere into which this curious book transports us is no more specially Hebraic than Idumean or Ishmaelite. The fund of ideas to be found in it is that which belongs in common to the nomad branch of the Semitic race, without any of the features which assign to the Jewish people a position so strongly marked in the bosom of that family."—"Job," "Etudes," p. xvi.

The evidence, then, is nullified by the hand which puts it in. Were the evidence ever so much to the point it would not bear out the statement that the God of the Hebrews is "a capricious and impenetrable sovereign," if only because such is not the God of the Book of Job. Impenetrable, indeed, God is to man, except so far as God reveals himself, and that "the God of the Hebrews" does this copiously, instructively, and impressively has already been shown. But God cannot be more impenetrable to the Hebrew or the Christian than He is to the philosopher, at least if Renan's words are to stand. What, however, we directly and emphatically deny is that "the God of the Hebrews" is capricious, whether in the Book of Job or in any other biblical writing. Both charges, indeed, vanish before the words uttered on the part of Job and of God in the last scene of the drama. While the former says—

"I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;
But now mine eye seeth thee;
Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes."

The latter declares that Job "had spoken the thing that is right," while he punishes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar for their "folly"—what Renan calls "their hypocritical piety." The whole terminates with the acceptance of Job on the part of God, who gave him twice as much as he had before, blessing his latter end more than his beginning (xlii). This sunshine of good fortune, so far from being capricious, is occasioned by the fundamental moral change which the patriarch underwent when he had been led of God to know him no longer in name but in reality.

The gross misrepresentations which these few words have pointed out and shown, ought to make the student cautious how

he trusts statements of Renan's which he is not in a position to verify.

In the midst of this thick, universal darkness, I discover one ray of promised light, for I read these words: "What reveals God is the moral sense." Undoubtedly. The infinite Father is seen in his finite child. Specially is he seen in Jesus, the "son of his love"—Jesus, who lived and died to serve his race. A mother's love suffices to reveal the tender and pitying Father. Moreover, conscience reveals God. Like the guilty couple of Eden, men still hear the voice of the Lord God in the cool of the day. The hearing of something which says "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," "Thou art the man," is matter of universal experience. Whence the command and the prohibition, and whence the penalty of the broken law? Ordinarily we know such things come from intelligent and moral beings. Hence the conclusion which is according to knowledge, that what is called conscience is God speaking in the human soul. You don't like the term soul? I will not dispute with you about names. Be it soul, be it mind, be it matter, the faculty is there, the voice is there, and the hearing ear is there, and the trembling spirit is there, and do what you will you cannot escape from it. No; as you did not call it forth, so you cannot drive it back. It is your master. It makes you miserable, and, unless you give due heed, it threatens to make your days a succession of punishments. These are simple facts. Their source I call God; if you have a better name, the use of it will not in the slightest alter the realities with which you have to deal.

These are indubitable verities. Are they recognised by Renan? Let us study his words:—

"Were humanity only intelligent it would be atheistic; but humanity, especially the higher races, possesses a divine instinct, the force, originality, riches of which shine forth in history with singular splendour. Duty, devotedness, self-sacrifice, things of which history is full, are inexplicable without God. If you refuse this great testimony of nature, you must allow that all worthy men have been dupes; you must treat as fools the martyrs of all ages; you must pity Jesus for having died when 33 years old."—"La Revue," p. 389.

The first statement in this passage has a suspicious look, "were humanity only intelligent it would be Atheistic." What follows? Human intelligence involves Atheism. If so, then the more intelligent men become the more they become Atheistic; and the ascendancy of intelligence is the triumph of Atheism.

Such is Renan's opinion. For my part I prefer the assertion of the Bible:—

"The fool hath said in his heart:
There is no God."—Ps. xiv., 1.

To deny God is to deny intelligence in its root. He that says "There is no God," declares either that he knows all things and so is God himself, or that knowing very little, he talks as if there

were nothing he did not know. Of all follies none greater than for a human being to utter a universal negative on his own authority.

The author takes apparently a better tone. "Humanity possesses a divine instinct," and hence performs acts of self-sacrifice. These things "are inexplicable without God." Yes, the argument is in substance good. But to be permanently good it must be strictly logical, and "logic," we are told, "leads to the abysses." The inconsistency occasions a doubt. Subtlety can undermine a cause while appearing to support it. Invalid proof is the surest disproof, and weak enough, as seen from Renan's position, is what follows:—"Deny this testimony, and worthy men have been dupes." Well, such they have been and such they are in his repeatedly expressed opinion. Only the philosophic few possess reality, and the reality they possess is the knowledge that they possess nothing certain.

As to treating the martyrs of all ages as fools, what else does he when he characterises "the grand instincts" by which they are inspired as "sublime follies" ("Etudes," p. 306) originating in man, and having their outcome created by the populace?"—

"If there is a work profoundly popular it is the secret labour which creates the saint. The multitude throws into the labour all its instincts, and confers the lofty title on its favourites. Thence the essentially democratical character of most of the saints,—redressers of wrongs, defenders of the weak, haughty and firm before the powerful; hence, also, the astonishing diversity of origin presented at first view by the troop of these blessed ones. There is everything in this popular pantheon; martyrs to some cherished cause; old and forgotten heroes; personages belonging to romance; Roland; William of Aquitaine; the ladies of Arthur's court. The reason is, that the people loves the great and the noble before all things; easy and fickle on many points, it canonises all its old acquaintances for the sake of their good looks; what is simply sensible and honourable touches it but little; it does not value objects for their reasonableness and utility, but for their imposing appearance.

"All the saints are great, but they are not equally good. Sometimes they seem terrible, imperious, vindictive. The moment of their triumph is that of their death. Their life, judged according to our modern ideas, seems imperfect because exclusive, because they saw things on only one side, because they were narrow and uncritical. I have no wish for their life, but I am jealous of their death. When you look at those calm and glorious deaths your soul rises and is strengthened; you recover some esteem for human nature, you are satisfied that that nature is noble, and that there is reason for being proud of it.

"But there will be no more saints. Saints canonised at Rome there will be, but none canonised by the people. *The faculty which creates legends is quitting humanity.* Compare that giant Loyola with Vincent de Paul. What a falling off. Instead of a sublime enthusiast, whom the grandeur of passion raises into a genius, you have a soul of silk which knew no other poetry than that of doing good, no other theology than love."—"Etudes," *Vie des Saints*, 308 seq.

"The faculty which creates legends is quitting humanity." This faculty is man's "divine instinct." Creating legends, it creates poetry and beauty of a certain sort; specially does it create the marvellous; accordingly it creates "the legend of Christ," that is, all in the history of Christ which lifts him high above the

human level; it even creates God—that is, its own God—the divinity whom it worships in the pantheon of its illusions and “the chambers of its imagery.” (Ezek. viii., 12.) Films and fancies of this sort constitute the idealism by which Renan gilds his materialistic philosophy. The only God that the moral sentiment owns is what he calls “the divine faculty in man,” whose products he magnifies because they elevate and ennoble our nature—as if that nature could be made great and happy by its own fond illusions. Undoubtedly, were his fancies our convictions, we should pity not only Jesus but the race he strove to serve, for, notwithstanding his good-natured benevolence, he was but a Vincent de Paul, and not a Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits; and even the grandeurs of the past are vanishing, like piles of empty cloud, to leave behind another having and needing no other light or heat than what comes from Renan’s idealistic naturalism.

Those who know little of Renan’s system of thought may suspect that I have committed a mistake when I represent him as making man make his Maker. “Such folly is too extravagant,” some one will say. Yet what are the words which follow the last sentence of the passage I quoted, the theme of which is, “What reveals God is the moral sentiment.” The words are—“God is the product of our human consciousness.” Be not surprised. It is the doctrine of the philosophic school to which Renan belongs.

I give the words with their accompaniments:—

“God is the product of our human consciousness, not of science and metaphysics. Not reason, but sentiment defines God. Yet every phrase applied to an infinite being is a myth; it encloses within limits what is unlimited. Every proposition applied to God is misapplied—except one: He is.”—*La Revue*, p. 389.

“Every phrase applied to an infinite being is a myth.” I know not in what sense the word myth is here used. I will take the least offensive, and then the statement is that “every phrase applied to an infinite being is an unreality.” Consequently, the term God, being a myth, is an unreality. The name thus banished, what is become of the name-bearer? Perhaps we can exchange the “cumbersome old word” for a better? No! “Every proposition applied to God is misapplied except one: He is.” What! the word Father? “Yes.” Creator? “Yes.” Benefactor? “Yes.” You must say of him only “He is.” May we not say He is being, or a being, or the being? “No.” But when we say “He is,” the question arises what? *What* is He? It cannot be answered. Another question arises: Who is He? It cannot be answered. Truly this, then, is “the unknown God;” and God unknown and unknowable is to man as good as no God at all. Besides, why this arbitrary stopping at the phrase, *He is*? Because everything else is a myth. How does that appear? Because nothing more is known. But what you tell me amounts to

nothing, since I know not who this *He* is, nor what *He* is. Are you yourself sure you have not entered the region of myth? *He*. What! is God of the masculine gender? or is this another "grammatical error" like atheism? However, having gone so far as to declare the infinite being a male, why stop there? Is this, too, a myth? Let us, then, strike out the subject of the proposition. What is left? Nothing; absolutely no statement at all, only the fragment of a sentence, *is*; something is, but who or what that something, remains in the thickest darkness.

Such is the last word and final product of the latest form of pantheistic metaphysics. No wonder Renan on another occasion pronounced all metaphysics barren.

A literary writer, already mentioned (p. 8), Lasserre, describes Renan's view of God thus:—

"Renan acknowledges that God has all qualities infinitely—goodness, justice, power. He refuses him only one—existence. This God resembles Roland's horse, which had all the perfections and only one defect, that of being dead." "L'Évangile selon Renan," p. 21.

Even this description contains too much, for goodness, justice, power, are the determining attributes which Renan refuses to admit, as involving too much individuality. In the review on— feels that it is of all things the most deplorable to be deprived of God, as felt and recognised in the moral sense. But the deprivation pleads analogy for its excuse, since if matter grows though it, why should it not grow love, reverence, and duty? I deny that it grows either. Names, however, do not determine things. The qualities of human nature remain the same by whatever source they are denoted. And of those qualities, some compel worship, even as others compel the domestic relations. Man is a worshipper. He can no more help worshipping than he can help wishing or willing. In other words, to own God is natural and unavoidable. You may debate about the name, but you cannot deny that man, consciously and unconsciously, theoretically and practically, owns God, for he bends his knee, beats his breast, and cries for mercy. This is a necessity of his nature; it is also its perfection and its joy. As such, it is the instinctive cry of the creature to the Creator, and the merciful response of the Creator to the creature. It is a link between earth and heaven. It is "Glory to God in the highest," in reply to "Lo, I bring you glad tidings of great joy." Realities so sublime and so potent you may disparage but you cannot destroy, for they have human nature on their side, as well as the will of the Sovereign of the Universe himself. Whatever reason may decide or do, the fact which rests on the two great pillars of religious knowledge—the Bible and the common voice of our race—remains, and will ever remain, irremovable.

If, however, Renan thinks that he has shaken those solid pillars,

ly proves by his notion that he is unqualified to treat of the
f Jesus.

t me not be misunderstood. I do not aver that Renan
iously and deliberately aims to disown and set aside God.
lone, knowing himself, knows exactly and fully what it is he
to accomplish. But this I do declare, namely, that Renan,
disallowing the biblical view of God and the view given by
ial philosophy, and while attempting to correct and refine
onceptions on the point, falls into "the abyss" where all
thought, all definite conception, all truth, all reality—all
our intellect demands, and our conscience gives, and our
nation universalises—where, in a word, God himself, as now
ed to the highest human natures, is lost, and lost so as to
coverable only by a totally different method.

e object of the present chapter is to confute atheism by
ig side by side the scriptural view of God with the material-
dealisms propounded by Renan. In looking back on what
ave written we become aware of the insufficiency of our
sentation of the former as compared with the rich, varied,
rand totality which is contained in the Bible itself. To the
then, we refer the reader, only subjoining two or three
ts in order to revive any impression he may have received
the former part of the chapter, to relieve his heart, possibly
ssed by the latter part, and to present in a few words the
al tenor of the whole.

ho hath made man's mouth, or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or seeing,
blind? Have not I, the self-subsistent one?"—Exod. iv., 11.

"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?
He that formed the eye, shall he not see?
He that warneth the nations, shall he not punish?
He that teacheth man knowledge, the Eternal One,
Shall he not know?"—Psalm xciv., 9, 10.

iovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant
iness and truth; keeping mercy down to the thousandth generation, yet
; no misdeed unpunished, and visiting the misdeeds of the fathers on the
n and on the children's children, as far as the third and fourth genera-
—Exod. xxxiv., 6.

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak;
And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
My doctrine shall drop as the rain,
My speech shall distil as the dew,
As the small rain upon the tender herb,
And as the showers upon the grass.
For I proclaim the name of Jehovah:
Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
He is the rock; his work is perfect,
And all his ways are righteousness;
A God of truth and without iniquity,
Just and right is he.
But they are a perverse and crooked generation.

Do ye thus requite Jehovah, O foolish people?
 Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?
 Hath he not made and established thee?
 Remember the days of old;
 Ask thy father and he will show thee.
 The Most High found Israel in a desert land,
 And in the waste-howling wilderness.
 He led him about, he instructed him,
 He kept him as the apple of his eye.
 As an eagle stirreth up her nest,
 Fluttereth over her young,
 Spreadeth abroad her wings,
 Taketh them, beareth them on her wings,
 So Jehovah alone did lead him,
 He made him ride on the high places of the earth,
 That he might eat the increase of the fields;
 He made him suck honey out of the rock,
 And oil out of the flinty rock;
 Butter of kine and milk of sheep;
 With fat of lambs, and rams from Bashan,
 And goats, with fat of kidneys of wheat.
 And the fiery blood of the grapes thou drankest.
 Yet thou forsookest God that made thee,
 And lightly esteemedst the rock of thy salvation.
 O that thou wert wise,
 That thou understoodst this,
 That thou wouldst consider thy latter end."—Deut. xxxii.

"Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness."—Nehemiah ix., 17.

"Like as as father pitieth his children
 So Jehovah pitieth them that fear him:
 For he knoweth our frame,
 He remembereth that we are dust."—Psalm ciii., 13.

"I know, O Jehovah, that thy judgments are right,
 And that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.
 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort,
 According to thy word unto thy servant.
 Let thy tender mercies come unto me
 That I may live, for thy law is my delight."—Psalm cxix., 75.

"O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good,
 For his mercy endureth for ever."—Psalm cvi., 1.

"When ye pray, say Our Father."—Matt. vi., 9.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii., 16.

"God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv., 24.

"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."—I John, iv., 16.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation; now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, **BE YE RECONCILED UNTO GOD.**"—2 Cor. v., 19.

THE SELF-REVEALING GOD.

"Stand and adore ! how glorious he
That dwells in bright eternity !
We gaze and we confound our sight,
Plunged in the abyss of dazzling light.

Seraphs, the nearest to the throne,
Begin to speak the great unknown ;
Attempt the song, wind up your strings
To notes untried, and boundless things !

You whose capacious powers survey
Largely beyond our eyes of clay ;
Yet what a narrow portion, too,
Is seen, or thought, or known by you !

How flat your highest praises fall
Before the immense original !
Weak creatures we, that strive in vain
To reach an uncreated strain.

Great God, forgive our feeble lays,
Sound out thine own eternal praise ;
A song so vast, a theme so high,
Call for the voice that tuned the sky."—*Isaac Watts.*

CHAPTER VI.

GOD BEARS WITNESS OF HIMSELF IN HISTORY.

WE have been engaged in studying the religious thought and sentiment of one generic division of the human family. It is the Shemitic of which the descendants of Abraham present the highest type. It would not be altogether unwarrantable if I had the reader take the lessons we have learnt in common as applicable to the race at large. In these pages, however, something less incomplete seems desirable, if only because the idea of a universal religion and a common Providence still obtains not but a restricted recognition. The history of religion is, in fact, co-extensive with the history of man. But so wide a range is here impossible. Happily science comes to our aid. Language which is common to man, regarded in the light of modern scholarship, divides itself, at least in its higher relations, into two main groups—namely, the Shemitic, with which we have had to do; and the Aryan, formerly called the Indo-Germanic tongues. The latter family embraces all the languages of civilisation, except the Shemitic. Taking its rise probably near the sources of the Indus, and spreading northwardly and westwardly, it became the parent of the Keltic and the Teutonic tongues, with their branches on the one side, the Greek, the German, the English; and on the other, the Latin, the Italian, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the French. Thus from the Sanscrit, the sacred tongue of Hindostan, the Aryan stem, and from the Hebrew or Arabic, the sacred tongue of Syria, especially Palestine, have proceeded the spirit and the literature of modern as well as ancient culture, of which religion was, as it still is, the generative and nutritive power. Now, since history is best expounded by the great, moral, religious, and intellectual luminaries of the several lands, a pantheon or Walhalla of distinguished personages, immortalised in the hearts and preserved in the literatures of nations, would be an unimpeachable as well as permanent witness of their several characteristics and an indisputable chronicle of their religious sentiments and positions: while thus bearing testimony to man it would also bear testimony to God. The fact that they all worshipped, combined with variations in the form of their adoration, would present God's witness of himself in history no less impressively than strikingly. Now, it so happens that at the head of these two great families, nor less at the head of their several branches, there stands in each case some one great individual who so

bodies and reflects the qualities of his brothers as to be a true and reliable image and representative of them. Accordingly, the history of man is included in the history of certain great religious founders. On the one side we see Abraham, Moses, David, Christ; on the other, Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha, Plato, Saint Augustin, Luther. What they were the civilised world is, and the civilised world is only man in the highest state of development yet reached. If, then, you want to know the real history of your race, study its great men; and if you want to trace the footsteps of Divine Providence, pass over the ages along the line of its ever-burning transcendent lights. The labour, which is a labour of love to the genuine student, is too vast to be attempted now, though it has occupied the lives and inspired the pens of some of the most instructed and best of our race, among whom Herder and Bunsen hold the foremost position. In biographical sketches already given not a little has been done which exemplifies and illustrates God's witness of himself, as given among Western Aryans, what follows in this chapter will extend that evidence and supply similar testimony, as presented in the Eastern branches of that distinguished race.

Were I writing with even a faint hope of influencing Renan in the matter of his opinions, I should hardly have given so decided a preference to the historical method; for with him history is a blunder, a scandal, a delusion, a disappointment. The conclusion is inevitable on the part of one who, if he has a God, has certainly no Providence. So diseased and distorted a view can be removed only by couching the eye that seeing sees not realities, but only the films of its own creation. Others, whom "much learning" has not distracted, retaining their natural senses, will recognise facts when put before them, and in so doing will hear the voice of God as he bears witness of himself in history.

History, as the plane of God's operations, is a reflection of God's dealings with man. To mortal eyes it has its dark spots, but they grow fewer as our eye grows stronger and more piercing, and so look as if they would pass away in the degree in which we learn to see things as they are, rather than as they appear. This hope cannot be entertained by one who, like Renan, holds that the multitude is silly and the select few blind—blind totally, except in knowing that it cannot see. So dark a past and so dismal a present threaten a yet darker and more dismal future. Improvement is certainly out of the question with our philosopher, who is content to stand and look at "this strange world of ours" with a vague and barren curiosity, well knowing that even religion, of all social powers the strongest, does but mislead in its plain prose and delude in its poetic ideals. Instead of making progress, the world recedes. Even religion, the religion of the cross, is dying out, while our race has parted with that spontaneity by

which at once it counterbalanced small losses by considerable gains. Within the scope of history, however, all things have been going wrong; the debtor side of the ledger frowns very darkly on the creditor, and to all appearance the concern is near bankruptcy.

If this view is correct, then every future is darker and fouler than its predecessor, and history is but a succession of ignorance, vice, folly, and fraud, ever becoming more and more intense. Retrocession, then, is the law of humanity. Each age has gone back from the present to the first. Consequently at the first men were more reasonable and more moral than they have ever been since.

This is not the fact. Our race has not receded in anything, but advanced. It has advanced from a state proximate to brutishness until it has reached a state of human development so lofty as in its purest models to be godlike. And this progress has been secured under the quickening and fostering influence of religion. In other words, God bears witness of himself in general history, as we have already seen he does in Hebrew history. This certainly is the representation made in Scripture. Enough to refer to Paul's discourse to the Epicureans and Stoics of Athens (Acts xvii). Moreover, the general tenor of the Bible is in favour of progress. When interpreted apart from the perverting and blinding influence of speculative systems of theology, the Old Testament and the New present one outflow of God's Spirit and one growth of man's higher nature. The sermon on the mount verifies my statements. Before it was delivered, indeed, the earliest word spoken by Jesus was a recognition of the continuity of Divine providence to the progressiveness of the life of man, considered as a great organic whole. What else is the import of these words?—

"Jesus came preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the good news."—Mark i., 14 seq.

That "good news" was the coming dominion of a paternal authority in men's hearts, homes, lives, societies. It was that dominion which had been announced in the earliest forms of human and social life, and in a very special manner to Abraham, "the friend of God" and "the father of the faithful." It was that dominion which "all the prophets" acknowledged and promoted. It was that dominion which was to spread from Jerusalem as its centre over the whole inhabited globe. Now, specially, fresh signs of its presence and power were manifest, for Jesus had come forth. And his appearance, he knew, was not casual, but providential; not unprepared, but prepared. "The time is fulfilled," he exclaimed. Other ages have done their work. Other dispensations of religion have deposited their rich and fertilising soils. Earth is ready for a fuller and brighter

manifestation of God ; therefore, change your minds, renounce the evil and choose the good by practically believing the glad tidings I am commissioned to proclaim.

The appearance of Christ is a dividing line between the Shemitic culture and the Aryan. The latter was, down to the last hundred years, for the most part unrecognised in the history of religion, and but imperfectly known and set forth in the general history of the world. Nevertheless, there it was at work in the near and the remote east, as well as in Greece and Rome, contributing its share, and that no inconsiderable one, to the wide and ever-swelling stream of culture, specially by developing man's higher nature, and before all by awakening, training, and refining conscience. In other words, over the immense tracts of the earth occupied by the Aryans, God bore witness of himself in the lives of great teachers, great benefactors, and a comparatively pure and lofty tone of morals alike in the home, in the city, and in the temple.

Before we proceed to give instances of these facts we must stop to pay some attention to the lowest form of religion as found among the Turanians. The name, denoting a condition of our race in its earliest emergings out of barbarism rather than a defined and distinct branch of human kind, has representatives in the Mongol tribes and the lowest trans-Atlantic hordes of modern times, and are not inaptly reflected in history by the Chinese, whether of the present day or the past. Some notice of these is the more important, because it will serve to illustrate the truth that the lowest of human beings are not wholly destitute of the idea of God, duty, and immortality, for most true is the declaration of scripture, even in those nations that "walked in their ways" God did "not leave himself without a witness." That witness is no less true than momentous. In its ultimate relations God's witness of himself is the only true witness, whether on earth or in heaven, and all other testimony resolves itself into the testimony which God gives of himself and of his eternal providence ; for what is the entire universe, man included, but an evolution, and as an evolution so a manifestation, of God, or in other words, an utterance of his will and a showing forth of his essential qualities, namely, goodness, love, holiness, wisdom, and power. Hence, to know the universe is to know God, especially as portrayed in the highest types of humanity.

CONFUCIUS (ABOUT 500 A.C.)

Chinese life, as it unfolds itself in religion, manners, and politics, is traceable back to the great sage and law-giver, Kong-fu-tse (Confucius). For when the archaic ideas, opinions, and observances which had been introduced under the pious king, Yao, and other God-fearing rulers of primæval times, fell into decay, owing to the neglects, feebleness, and vices of later

emperors, and immoral potentates had called forth social confusion, and impaired the happiness of the people, then there came forwards a man who, though trained in poverty, made himself familiar with the antiquities of his people, and finding a painful contrast between the degeneracy of his own days and the excellencies of the olden time, resolved to restore the ancient laws and institutions. Proceeding on the principle that man is naturally virtuous, and that he needs only sound examples, Confucius, in order to make the entire nation good, set before it the morals and condition of antiquity and the qualities and deeds of former generations as the mirror of the true life of man; and having collected and arranged the old national traditions, as contained in the sacred book called *Kings*, did his best to awaken in the people a love of the right and the good. He thus became the author of a system of doctrine which extended to all the activities of the nation, and shaped its entire moral existence. He himself carefully avoided the appearance of all novelty. "My doctrine," he said, "is that which our forefathers taught and transmitted; I have added nothing, I have taken away nothing; I teach truth in its original purity; it is unchangeable as heaven itself, from which it is derived. I merely, like the sower, strew the seed I have received, unchanged, over the earth." Confucius lived now honoured by the emperors and rewarded with office and honour, now persecuted and driven into exile. Youths eager for knowledge ever hung around him and received words of wisdom and practical virtue from his lips. His name remains to all generations in the highest reverence; his memory is kept alive by commemorative temples; his character is placed above that of all mortals; and his descendants stand in the highest ranks of the nobility. The doctrines which he set forth, and illustrated and diffused by means of numerous teachers, especially Meng-tse (360 A.C.) and Tshu-tse, "the prince of knowledge," soon became the centre of the higher life of China. The most important work of Kong-fu-tse was the restoration of the national religion, of which the mythical king, Fo-hi, passes as the founder. This is still the predominant faith, by the side of which only the doctrine of Lao-tse and Buddhism, imported from India, have obtained any consideration.

ZOROASTER.

Of the personal history of Zoroaster (Zarathustra or Zerdusht) little is known. The exact date of his appearance is a matter of doubt. He seems to belong to the pre-historical age of the old Iranian empire, which came to an end with the foundation of the Medo-Persian kingdom (550 A.C.). He is represented as having spent ten years of solitude in the mountain of Arya, absorbed in religious meditation. Returning into the

world, he travelled with a view to diffuse his religion, erecting altars to fire from place to place. The principles and doctrines he held and taught are contained in the Zead Avesta, which consists of twenty-one books, all commonly ascribed to Zoroaster ; of these, two contain forms of prayer and praise used in public worship ; six treat of moral obligation ; four set forth the articles of belief ; the same number have to do with right, law, and government ; one lays down the ritual ; one also teaches astronomy and astrology ; one, again, gives instruction in medicine ; one shows forth the virtues and uses of amulets ; one gives some account of Zoroaster himself, and the introduction of his law by Hystaspes (Gustasp). Thus the work appears to comprise the whole circle of knowledge so far as known to the Iranian race. It was originally written in the arrow-head characters.

The ancient Iranian religion, which was a naturalistic dualism, was purified and raised into a higher form by Zoroaster. He divided the world into two kingdoms ; (1) the pure world of light, which had for its ruler Ormuzd (Ahuramazda, the source of goodness and holiness) ; (2) the world of darkness swayed by Ahriman (Agrimaingus, *the ill-disposed*) the centre of evil and ruin. Each had under him bands of spirits varying in rank ; Ormuzd the six Ampshaspands, with the Fervers, and Izedas, corresponding to the archangels and angels of Jewish Mythology ; and Ahriman, the Dews (thence Zeus, Deus, Jove) also divided into orders and classes. These two primal potentates existed from the first, but Ormuzd, proceeding from Zervane Akerene, or endless time, was the more mighty. He made the world by means of his creative word—Honover, a kingdom of light where were only goodness and purity. When, however, Ormuzd had withdrawn into his celestial abode, Ahriman, in the form of a serpent, made his way through the creation and filled it with bad spirits, with unclean and noxious beasts, and with sins and vices. From this antagonistic dualism a conflict arose between the two powers for universal sovereignty. The combat, continuing as long as time lasts, ends with the opening of eternity, when the good principle gaining the victory destroys the evil principle, fills the world with light, and inaugurates a reign of justice, peace, and bliss. Then the worshippers of Ormuzd, whose souls are on trial found pure, receive a glorious light-body, which casts no shadow, and at the foot of Ormuzd's throne enjoy endless happiness in celestial glory. It is accordingly their supreme duty, during their sojourn on earth, to withstand, undermine, and overthrow the evil spirits, with all the resources they can command, thus working with Ormuzd for the accomplishment of his benevolent designs.

The doctrine that Ormuzd sprang from Zervane Akerene (boundless time) denotes that the Zend religion was a step in

advance from the inert naturalism of the earliest ages, when they were as yet component parts of the nature, with which they were connected, not having awaked to a consciousness of their individuality. Then God was unrevealed, and consequently unknown. The day when man first knew himself he knew God. That which was before to him merely boundless time became revealed as the Great Sun, as Ormuzd signifies, which is the fount of earthly good. Yet, with good evil is in fact mingled. That evil could not come from the good principle. Nevertheless, there must have a cause, and a sufficient cause for everything, and so the evil principle arose, and received recognition. Evil, however, is the opposite of good. Hence collision. But good is of the Eternal God and must in the end prevail. Accordingly, evil is banished from creation and the rule of good becomes universal.

This certainly is a pure and lofty form of religion. Its spirit is no less benign than intelligent, and it answers effectually the great questions—Whence the universe? Whence evil? What will the end of these things be? Reminding the student of especially the early sentences of the Bible, and, in some important points, resembling the Gospel, it even surpasses our popular Christianity, and agrees with Paul in representing God as “all in all”—(1 Cor. xv., 28.)—the final issue and consummation of Divine Providence.

The spirit of Zoroasterism may be gathered from a chant of eleven strophes, each of three lines, which appears to have been the sage himself for author. We subjoin only the more important utterances:—

“I communicate to such as draw near the wise maxims of the Omniscient One; I sing the praises of the living God; I celebrate the worship of the Good Spirit, and I see truth come forth from the sacred flame and take its upward flight. There are two Spirits, equally free; they reign over thought, word, act; they are the Good Spirit and the Bad. You must choose the one or the other; choose the Good Spirit. These are they that by their opposition produce all human deeds; being and not being, the first and the last, are the effects of those two. Liars shall be wretched; truth-speakers shall be saved. Choose. In accepting the lying spirit you prepare for yourselves the most terrible fate; those who are for Ahoura Mazda, the true and holy God, must honour him by truth and holiness. Mazda is the first-born of creation. O Mazda! when Virtue falls in distress on the earth, thou comest to her succour; thou givest the empire of the earth to the pious man; thou punishest the deceiver. Let us by assiduous efforts try to gain that happy life. Follow the footsteps of the pious. There you will find truth, salvation, and happiness.”

What, then, is the witness which God bears of himself in Zoroasterism?

1. God is one, God is eternal. Before him nothing was, and everything exists by him.
2. The universe is a true creation in all the force of the term, and not an emanation. The creature appears and remains distinct from his Creator.
3. The creation is composed of spirit and matter. Matter is

an inert substance, in itself incapable of good and evil; spirit is capable of morality. There is a spiritual order, and that order is twofold. Ormuzd is sovereign from all eternity over the good spirits; Ahriman rules during time over the evil spirits.

4. Man is composed of a body and a soul.

5. Chastisements await the guilty; the just receive a due recompense.

6. The chastisements cure the moral evil, whence they flow, within the limits of this state. The rewards are everlasting.

7. God carries on the moral government of the universe.

8. God so cares for his children of the human family that he reveals to them his will. That will is recorded in the Zend books. The revelation so made is intended for man as man. The time will come when it will be universally professed.

A religion so spiritual, and containing so clear a recognition of God's moral supervision, could not fail to include the practice of adoration. Here follows an example :—

“O Thou, who art pure, teach me the truth. What does Ormuzd desire? Pure and holy deeds. He gives abundance to the righteous. O King, thou dost solace and support the poor.”

BRAHMANISM.

Whether the culture of Bactria laid the earliest layers of the culture of India, or the culture of India was the parent of the culture of Bactria, certainly the two possess similar features which argue a common origin; only that the further you go in the remote East, the more you find man overpowered by the despotic forces of nature, and condemned, even in his most advanced stages of culture, to a passive and contemplative mode of existence, whence flows torpor and mazziness on the part of man, and pantheism in regard to the universe and God. Accordingly, objective and distinctive existence passes away, good and evil lose their qualities, virtue and vice become indifferent. As the living and true God passes out of the universe, he takes endeavour, resistance, strength, character with him, leaving man to bow down beneath natural forces so overpowering as to crush even the thought of antagonism. Such is the condition into which Renanism tends to reduce the manly, vigorous, moral, and independent civilisation of modern Europe. The moment men feel themselves overborne by the external universe, or in the iron hand of destiny, or subject to the sport of chance, they, like the Chinese, lose their manhood and their courage in losing their liberty, until they yield to the rushing stream of natural forces, and are carried to perdition. The actual condition of Hindostan, a product of some four thousand years of semi-conscious culture, still remains in existence to attest the general bearing of these observations.

The evil, however, was not unchecked. The ideas essential to

human nature, and without which man would not be man—namely, God, retribution, immortality—found a not ungenerous soil in the Hindoo, especially as by nature he was inclined to wrapt and prolonged meditation, under the pressures of which his soul was drawn out and lifted upwards in worship. This deep thought and this uplifting, encouraged by natural aspects the grandest and the most enkindling, led on one side to a philosophy the most profound and aerial, and on the other to a religion equally refined, pervasive, and potent. The latter, aided by a vivid imagination, created a system of theological concepts and devout sentiment, which produced a sacred literature alike rich and varied, and a religious force that is not yet exhausted after the lapse of four thousand years. The religious symbolism which hence arose appears in its earliest form in the books termed Vedas, in whose simple hymns the sun, the moon, the air, the earth, fire, receive on rustic altars sprinkled with milk, or a vivifying liquor, the homage of the Aryan patriarchs, expressed in their melodious songs. These external manifestations had for their root the collective idea of Div, which still exists in our word *divine*, and which originally denoting heaven acquired the sense of a unique and sovereign potentate. When, setting out from the banks of the Indus, they had colonised those of the Ganges, founding cities and constituting kingdoms, they came in possession of a positive form of religion which is set forth in the Manavadharma, a code of the sacerdotal age. There we see Brahma (the personal form and natural evolution of the neuter Brahm), the Great Ruler, father of the first manus (man), the protoplast of the human race, seconded by the ten patriarchs, and surrounded by the genii of the elements—Indras or Sakras, the *ether*; Agnis, *fire*; Varunas, *water*; Vayus, *air*; Kuvéras, *mineral wealth*; Darmas or Yamas, *justice and death*. By their side the sidereal genii—Suryas or Mitras, the *sun*; Somas or Sandras, the *moon*; Usa, the *dawn*; Asvino, *twilight*; Pritivi, the *earth*—with the five planets, made up the supreme court, to which were added the twenty-eight lunar asterisms, the nymphs and songstresses of heaven, and the genii of the atmosphere, among whom Vishnus and Sivas held as yet only a very inferior rank. All these luminous divinities, these Devas, whose common mother is Aditis, that is, nature undivided, an emblem of the universe, are in struggle with the Daityas or Titans, offspring of Ditis, the brute earth, which withstood the progress of civilisation.

Did our space allow us to follow out these names and conceptions we should live again and again in the religions not only of the east but the west, nor less of the south and the north; the whole presenting, nor least in the religions of Greece and Rome, a full and manifest proof of the unity as of religion so of the human race, and exhibiting among much of earthly dross the celestial testimony borne all over the globe by the one Creator to

himself and to his all-pervading providence. Instead of following the theme into its natural branches, we must content ourselves with translating two or three poetic selections, illustrative of the general subject, from the most ancient sacred books of India.

THE SUPREME BEING.

"A supreme mind fills all the divinities, a Supreme Mind fills the universe. Whatever bodies do is really effected by One Mind throughout the world. It is an eternal power and efficacy, impervious to mortal sense; a golden light, visible only in blessed slumbers. By some it is called fire, by some the Creator, *Manos*; others give it the name of *Indra*, or the pure air; others again prefer *Perennial Brahma*. Clothing animated beings in a five-fold vestment (the five senses), he pervades living men so that they are born, grow, and die successively. Acknowledging him as living in all things, enter the sacred shrine of *Brahma* with a heart kind and just toward all men."

THE CREATION.

"In the beginning was darkness, black chaos, formless and deep; an empty, inert gulf, wherein all things lay sunk in torpor. Then God, the self-existent, the author of the universe, calling forth the primal seeds, emerged from the shades of night, and penetrating the entire chaos, shone forth from the world in birth, the sacred, incomprehensible, eternal, all-producing Divinity."

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE.

"To speak the truth in testimony is the highest honour. He who speaks truth from the heart has no superior. What if the wicked reason with themselves, 'No one sees us,' yet are they seen of God, the inmost guest of each man's heart. Moreover, you are surrounded by witnesses in the heaven, the air, the fire, the sun and moon, night and day. Perhaps thou sayest, 'I am alone—what care I for the rest?' No; the judge holds an assize in thy heart—God himself who gives evil for evil no less than good for good. Let nothing separate thee from him. Then wilt thou escape from the Ganges flood and the hyperborean snows."

THE IMMORTAL SOUL.

"The pure mind, exempt from death, the foster-child of the universe, goes forwards through all the ages. Birth and death are unreal appearances, but the pure mind is neither born nor dies. As men put on a new dress when their old one is worn out, so the soul clothes itself in a new body, rejoicing in the act."

THE WAY OF SALVATION.

"A mind that cleaves to what is true and just, a gentle and benignant heart, homage to your God and your parents, is the triune way of salvation."

HEAVEN THE HOME OF THE TRULY RELIGIOUS.

"The earnest mind lives by virtue and by bearing the yoke of religion. If you make God your friend by piety, and man by love, then, shining like a spotless star, you shall flee away to your native land in heaven."

BUDDHA.

The pantheistic tendency of Brahmanic speculation, especially as evinced in the Sankya philosophy, bore in its bosom the germ of Buddhism, the most widely-spread form of religion in the East. Buddha (the awakened or enlightened), a name of honour given

to a prince of Capilavaster, the capital of a small kingdom so called in Northern India, was born probably in the first half of the sixth century, A.C. Possessed of a well-made and handsome person, he, when sixteen years of age, married three wives, and passed his days in sensuous enjoyments. On one occasion, however, when riding in state from his palace, he met an aged man, a sick person, a corpse, and a priest. Led by what he saw to meditate on old age, disease, death, and religion, he in his nine-and-twentieth year renounced his throne, shorn his hair, and, retaining one only sign of royalty in his yellow robe, withdrew into solitude to meditate on the evils of life and on the means of their removal. Taking the name of Sakya-Mouni—that is, anchorite of the warrior race of Sakya—he begged his way to a settlement of hermits near the city of Radshagriha, with a view to seek initiation in the doctrines and ascetic practices of the Brahmins. Disappointed in the result, he, after a noviciate of some duration, withdrew into a desert, and passed six years on the bank of a river, without fire and under the most rigorous mortifications, until at last he was rewarded with a knowledge of the truth. Then he went forth into public life as a religious teacher, and, accompanied by some disciples, travelled over the wide spaces watered by the Ganges, proclaiming his doctrine in town and country, and exhorting the people to seek a remedy from the ills of life, not in asceticism, but in the knowledge of divine wisdom. Living on the liberalities of others, he wandered from city to city, and from land to land, teaching and preaching. Kind-hearted, gentle, and lowly, he soon won many hearts and conciliated great respect. Monarchs became his pupils. Special attention did he pay to the poor and humble, who naturally turned to him, seeking refuge and relief from the disdain of the priests and the disqualifications of caste. After an active career in journeys of benevolence, lasting twenty years, he retired into solitude, and died in advanced age under the same fig tree where first he had received his illumination.

The nature of his doctrine is differently represented. With some he is a nihilist, believing neither in God, duty nor immortality. This is not the place for a philosophic discussion. The preceding sketch of Buddha's life contradicts the theory. A life of active self-sacrifice, especially as redeemed from monkism, is essentially a religious life. Such was the life of Luther, who, from being a monk, became the inaugurator of the Reformation; and that change was induced by another change, namely, his relinquishment of asceticism for a natural manner of existence. Finding neither strength nor peace in self-mortifications, Luther became a man, and becoming a man he became a true follower of "the man Christ Jesus," in whose spirit and power he undermined the papacy and renewed the world. In a similar manner, and by similar power, Sakya-Mouni wrought the great social trans-

formations which he effected. Luther, great in denial, was greater in affirmation. Buddha destroyed traditional falsities and existing superstitions, but only so as to bring about (to use his own image) the "new birth" of society. An "atheist" he was after the manner of the primitive Christians, who denied the divinities of Olympus. Why? Because they believed in "the only living and true God." But like them, his negativism sprang from the fullest and grandest positivism. The denial that is born of faith is the parent of genuine religion, and an efficient instrument of social reform.

In truth, a great revolution of opinion has been undergone by the learned in proportion as the discovery of new relics of the Buddha doctrine has rewarded diligent and unwearying research. I subjoin some sentences, which are among its most recently-obtained utterances.

The essential thought of Buddhism is that the extinction of desire is perfect peace, while perfect peace is peace in God.

"He who has subdued good and evil and thrown off all the chains of desire, who lives without vice and without suffering, is the true Brahman."

"He who is pure as the morn, he whose equable temper nothing disturbs, he who has extinguished the flame of desire, he alone is the true Brahman."

"He who aspires to nothing, and doubts no longer when he has seen the truth, he who acknowledges his own immortality, is the true Brahman."

"He who triumphs over a hundred thousand men in fight is doubtless a hero, but he is a hero far differently deserving renown who has subdued himself."

"Not even Brahma can nullify the triumph gained over himself by such a man."

"He who is full of respectful piety toward those whom he ought to revere, will be rich in these four good things: length of days, beauty, joy, power."

"One single day of a wise and well-ordered life is worth a hundred years of folly."

"One day spent in searching after the way of immortality is better than a hundred days without the reflection."

"The divinities themselves envy the man who is never weary of meditation, who is content with peaceful repose, full of pious recollections."

"To do no evil, to neglect no good, to preserve your heart pure and spotless, such is the law of the Buddhists."

"The best prayer is gentle and modest patience. For the Buddhist Nirvana (peace of soul) is only (in) what is good."

"Joys shared even with the divinities give not true pleasure to the sage; he who is truly wise rejoices to see all desire die within him."

"Intercourse with Buddha is full of delight, the way of the true doctrine, the perfect concord of society, the concord which reigns in fraternal meditation."

"He who has acknowledged the true law of the Deity must revere him as the Brahman reveres the sacred fire."

What have we here but the great Christian truth that a soul, set free from the outward and sunk in God, enjoys the true life in the exercise of all the personal, social, and religious virtues? Accordingly, the following Buddhic injunctions are at once moral and religious:—

- "1. Never kill anything that lives.
2. Never steal.

3. Never commit impurity.
4. Never lie.
5. Never drink anything intoxicating."

Nor is the external act alone regarded :—

"If the spirit, which is the master, is subdued, its servants will of themselves abstain. Of what use, then, is it to kill the faculty and not the evil spirit."

But no "evil spirit" can be killed except by a good spirit. Evil opposed to evil becomes doubly evil. God only can overpower Satan. It follows that Buddha, one of whose fundamental principles was to kill evil in its roots, must have believed in God, the sole power equal to the result. In other terms, a recognition of God is implicated in the enforced duty of killing "the evil spirit."

To kill the spirit of evil was the Nirvana, or extinction, of all the disturbing and disordering passions of man's soul, thus leaving it at peace in God. Accordingly Buddha, when near the end of his days, describes himself as having realised this state of complete composure and permanent rest :—

"I have attained the highest wisdom ; I am without desire ; I wish for nothing ; I am without self-love, without self-interest, without pride, without arrogance, without hatred. Till lately I hated, I was passionate, full of errors ; a slave to birth, age, sickness, vexation, pain, suffering, solicitude, misfortune. O that millions of men may quit their abode, live as saints, and, after living on contemplation and renouncing desire, rise again in the new birth of Brahma's worlds and fill them with innumerable multitudes."

Here is the genuine Buddha perfection. It is that moral and spiritual perfection which, delivering the soul from all subservience to sense and self, makes it free, vigorous, and peaceful in God and in God's eternal world of spirit. This is a result comparable with the highest aim and issue of Christianity. And this emphatically is the witness which God bore and bears in Buddhism to the untold myriads of human beings over whom that system has held, and still holds more or less, beneficent sway. One point of resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity deserves special mention, namely that the process of extinguishing evil, which is completed hereafter, is begun and carried forwards here. This is what the apostle had in view when he bad Timothy (1 Ep. vi., 12) "lay hold on eternal life, to which thou art called." In both cases the true life of man, the life of God in the soul, commences on this side the grave and is continued and perfected on the other.

Two forms of the oriental Aryanism have each a great personage at the centre, Zoroaster and Buddha. In and through them God bore witness of himself to the swarming populations of remote Asia. The result is already before us in general terms. It has, however, a feature which I desire to bring into prominence.

The two teachings are such, but not teachings merely. The teachings come from teachers whose lives exemplify and enforce what they teach. Such a ministry is more appropriately termed salvation than instruction; and the rather may the term be used because both teachers, after years of secluded meditation, came forwards and spent their lives in a mission involving privation and self-denial on a large scale. Buddha is represented as moved to his enterprise by the sight of the great natural evils of our human existence. Moreover, these he removes by a medicine of the soul, which, proving effectual in producing "perfect peace" in himself, accomplished the same great change in all others who were faithful to their opportunity.

The concluding sentences show that in speaking of salvation I am thinking of nothing external, nothing sacramental, nothing juridical, no compact, no expiation, no substitution, no transference, but a real, moral, spiritual, and individual renewal, such as that which, as we have seen, Socrates achieved when he exchanged his natural irascibility for imperturbable composure of spirit. The salvation which the Athenian sage underwent thereby, and the salvation which Buddha experienced and enabled others to become possessed of, was doubtless dim and pale compared with the genuine and the highest forms of Christian salvation. Yet there is "a new birth" in all three, and so Zoroaster and Buddha were oriental precursors of Christ, as John the Baptist went before him on the shores of the Mediterranean.

I ask attention to the fact the rather because it is too customary to conceive of the pagan world as totally covered of old with darkness and the death shade. Doubtless evil did exist, and spread in fearful and lamentable proportions. Yet God had not left the fine races of Persia and Hindostan without a witness. His providence is as wide as the all-covering skies, nor less fostering, invigorating, renewing; and the same fatherly wisdom and love that raised up and sent Jesus, raised up and sent also Confucius, Zoroaster, and Buddha. The fact will call forth gratitude in everyone who is penetrated by the spirit of Jesus, whose love was as impartial and comprehensive as it was tender, rich, and self-denying. Strange that any of those who profess to call him Master should ever have ventured to enhance their own high and ample privileges by undervaluing the privileges and darkening the condition of others. Surely true moral good is enhanced in value in the degree in which it is shared.

There is, however, a special evil connected with this grudging Christianity. The unbeliever looks on it and is confirmed in his unbelief. Religion, he concludes, is an unreality, for even those who hold it in its admittedly highest form are so far destitute of its spirit as to be unable to enjoy their own good unless at the cost of others. This narrow and selfish spirit not long since continued to defame Mahomet in order to honour Christ, and still consigns

to everlasting woe all but his avowed disciples, as if their own heaven would be no heaven but for the contrast of others' hell. Were this Pharisaic spirit easily teachable it might receive a useful lesson from the fact that God, in the witness he bore through Zoroaster, taught, as the Bible teaches, that really his "mercies endureth for ever." The true spirit of the Christian finds utterance in the following words from the pen of the late pious, benevolent and learned Chevalier Bunsen :—

"Let us not forget the great services rendered to humanity by the Aryans of Eastern Asia. They at a very early period saw God in the universe, under the form of a Conscious Spirit, which radiates in the spirit of each individual man, and which is not only recognised in conscience but perceived by reason, so far as is possible to finite thought. Thus they supplemented the too exclusive, too individual character of the Jewish religion, and paved a path for the advent of Jesus, and the rule of true Christianity."—"Gott in der Geschichte," iv., 4.

Even yet more distinctly, fully, and emphatically does God bear witness of himself in the Aryans of the Western world. Here it would be enough to satisfy any impartial student of history if I did no more than refer to the great literatures among the heathen Aryans of ancient Greece and Rome, and among the moderns of Italy, France, Germany, and England. Christian Aryanism, as exemplified in such men as Origen, Chrysostom, Melancthon, Zwingli, Tauler, Jeremy Taylor, John Wesley, and a host of others, is one prolonged line of testimonies in which God declares his divine majesty, creative power, overflowing love, and ceaseless providence in the production of human types of the highest and completest kind, themselves vindicating his benignant rule, while they assert man's essential goodness and foretell the grandeur of his future destiny. Yet, as I write not so much for the learned as for the untaught, I will subjoin to instances and illustrations already given one or two short notices. I begin with the great Plato, an Athenian philosopher and the worthy disciple of Socrates, who was born 429 A.C. of a race which traced its origin back to King Codrus. The greatest intellectual genius of the Aryan world, gifted alike with a vivid and soaring imagination, a religious temperament, a vast comprehension, keen analytical and readily and happily constructive power, the whole pervaded and controlled by high and refined moral sentiment, Plato devised and published a system of spiritual philosophy which made him in this department the light of the world, and yet left the world hungering and thirsting, like the philosopher himself, for something more full, more remedial, more salutary, more certain, which, as he held, could come only from the direct action of God himself on man through a divinely prepared and commissioned messenger. Thus regarded, Plato paved the way for Jesus, in union with whom he linked the Aryan with the Shemitic race, and so completed the testimony which man bears to God, and fills up the magnificent urn of light by which God bears witness of himself to

man. The religion which has Christ for its divine and human author, and Plato for its intellectual exponent and defender, is, and will remain, safe against every form of idealistic materialism.

PLATO AGAINST THE ATHEISTS.

In the tenth book of his great work on Law, the ripe production of his old age, Plato sets forth his views of religion in opposition to atheism, treating the subject against, first, those who denied the Divine existence; second, those who, admitting the existence of God, denied providence; and third, those who, admitting both God and providence, held that the Deity was easily propitiated, or would not punish sin severely.

The first part is introduced by a declaration made by Clinias, a Cretan, one of the three interlocutors (Megillus, a Macedonian, and a nameless Athenian, representing Socrates, being the two others), to the effect that it must be easy to prove the existence of the Deity. He appeals to the most obvious phenomena of nature—the sun, the earth, the stars, &c.—as conclusive evidence, especially when taken together with the universal belief of the human race in God. This gives occasion for the chief speaker (the Athenian) to suggest that the subject is not without its difficulties—difficulties, however, not intrinsic, but arising from men's imposing upon themselves by the words *nature*, *chance*, *art*, referring to the old atheists of the Ionic or materialising school. After a short digression, the Athenian devotes himself to the work of refutation, and commences a subtle disquisition respecting the nature of the soul as in its essence involving self-movement. This power he shows is not possessed by matter. Consequently, the mover preceding the moved, the soul is anterior to the body. It follows that nature is not the mother (as the atheists asserted) but the child of art; and that, therefore, law, will, design, and thought were before hard, soft, heavy, and light, as well as all the adaptations of the natural world. The atheists had alleged that religion and belief in God being the products of human law, itself a production of art, while art itself was the offspring of nature, therefore religion and all ideas of the just and the right were conventionalities, and had no higher than a human source. This atheistical argument the Athenian overturns by showing the priority of soul, and consequently of those ideas as essential elements of its constitution. In his proof of the automatic action of the soul, he enters into a minute examination of the different kinds of motion, summing those up under two heads, motion by impact and intrinsic motion. The latter he identifies with Psyche or soul, by a kind of logical necessity, or considerations drawn from the force of terms representing innate ideas. Having thus established soul as the primary cause, he inquires whether soul is in form one or two. Two, he decides; one good, the other bad. The former is uniform, constant, exhibiting the highest reason in

all its movements, comparable with those of a sphere; the other, without reason, disorderly, maniac. After this, a statement is made of three methods by which soul may guide the motions of the heavenly bodies; either by an indwelling spirit, a soul with an ethereal body, or a soul void of body and external to the object which it guides.

This brings the Athenian to the second division, namely, the arguments of those who deny providence. After premising that men are led to this opinion by seeing the apparent impunity and prosperity of the wicked, he shows that it is derogatory to right views of the divine nature. For, if we admit that God is possessed of every virtue, indolence and indifference can form no part of his character. Neither can there be in him a lack of power. He will not, consequently, neglect anything, whether great or small. Next is shown the importance of small things, as parts of a whole, so that but for them the great could not exist. Hence, a providence which is special in being general, and general in being special; for every whole includes its parts. The method of this providence is not by an inherent necessity, but by God's sovereignty, which causes every agent to find its fitting place, and every place to have a fitting agent. In other words, virtue is made to rise, vice to fall, until the former reaches heaven and blessedness, the latter sinks to hell and wretchedness. This eternal justice, or fixed law of God's government, no one can avoid, and apart from it neither a life of happiness nor a life of misery can be explained.

The third division of the argument concerns those who view sin as a trifle, confiding in the general mercy of God as easily moved by prayer and sacrifices. Can—it is asked—can God be bribed by the wages of iniquity? Not even dogs will by similar considerations be prevailed upon to admit the wolf into the flock. Arguments of a similar tendency are also drawn from the fact of there being a tremendous battle, the interminable (*deathless* in the Greek) battle, the battle between good and evil, in which all that is good fights on one side and all that is evil fights on the other, victory of the one over the other being the aim of both: while the least compromise on this side or that is treason. This battle must be fought out, and every soul of man must take his side and abide the result.

There is something singularly fine in the whole treatise. Specially grand and imposing in the original is the description of the everlasting conflict of good and ill.

And what is this but a repetition of the Persian duel between Ormuzd and Ahriman—only that the earlier form surpasses the later, inasmuch as the earlier makes the fighting end in favour of good, while the later makes the conflict endless. Hence the notion of endless punishment, which has inflicted so much torture in the Christian Church.

The Platonic doctrine is manifestly a systematised theism. As such it contains everlasting and momentous verities. In them lies God's witness to himself. The processes by which they are set forth may or may not vary from those by which the witness was actually borne and the verities acquired. The method is a secondary matter, the witness itself everything.

In saying this I must not be held to approve all that is asserted in the trilogy. The third division contains perhaps as much error as truth. Sin certainly is not a light matter, nor can sin be expiated by prayer and sacrifice. No; God is not bribed, whether the bribe be human blood or the blood of bulls, sheep, or rams. Yet God is good, and to confide in God's mercy is as right as for a child to confide in the lasting mercy of a father or the deathless love of a mother. Only the faith must be of the heart—faith unfeigned, faith unconquerable, "faith working by love," that love which covers a multitude of sins. 1 Pet. iv., 8.

Thoroughly practical is the religion which Plato here expounds. In one sense it is too practical, for it is stern even to the use of force in self-defence. This, however, is the weak and perishable side of a grand idea, which declares that religion is so essential to a commonwealth (a state governed by law) that without it you have not a society, but a mere herd of disconnected and unsympathising—and as such, conflicting and mutually destroying—individuals. The idea is as true as grand, if by religion is meant, not its form as in outward alliance with a state, but its essence and spirit as existing in the hearts and appearing in the lives of every citizen. The latter is what Christ means by the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, while the former he disallows and condemns when he declares, "My kingdom is not of this world," and adds, "Give unto God what is God's while you give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's."

To serve God is to honour father and mother. This biblical principle finds distinct and emphatic recognition in—

PLATO'S TEACHINGS ON DUTY TO PARENTS.

"If any one hath a father, or mother, or grandparents worn out with age, and laid up as sacred relics in his house, let him never suppose, as long as he possesses this altar of the domestic hearth, that any other sacred image is more worthy of his veneration, provided he knows how to worship it aright."

"Let us then believe that we can have no religious image more precious in the sight of Heaven than a father, or grandfather, or mother worn out with age, and that in proportion as we honour or delight in them with a religious joy in the same proportion does God himself rejoice."

"Every one that hath reason both fears and honours the prayers of parents, knowing well that often, and to many, they have been fulfilled."

"The curse of a parent comes loaded with calamity to children in a way that is true of no other relations."

"If any one shall dare to treat with violence father or mother, having before his eyes neither the fear of the powers above nor of the vengeance of the world beneath, but despising the ancient and universal traditions of mankind shall break through all law, for such an one there is need of some most extreme

remedy. Death that remedy; but something beyond—even those pains. Hades which are said to await those unnatural offenders.”—“De Legibus.”

I pass over the Roman Catholic Church, which, though without its glory, must on the whole be considered as a rank and degenerate offshoot of the gospel tree, asking Bunsen to describe

THE QUALITIES OF THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

1. The Church, in its true meaning, is constituted of disciples of Christ whether laity or clergy, but certainly not of the clergy alone. Consequently, whatever concerns the clergy as clergy does not belong to Christianity.

2. The Church is the representative of the recognition of God in worship. Consequently, worship ought to be intelligible, intelligent, and founded on the Bible.

3. The Church considered nationally ought to represent God's people. Consequently, it ought to have an ecclesiastical and political constitution conformed to Christianity, that is to say moral.

4. No difference between deeds of piety and good works. Consequently, marriage and family discipline are independent. No auricular confession, no celibacy. Consequently, poetry and art are reputed sacred, whether ecclesiastical or secular.

5. Personal faith is the condition of internal peace in God. Consequently, conviction is free, research and meditation free, though dominated by the recognition of God; hence, liberty of thought, liberty of speech, or what is called liberty of conscience.

The return toward a true Christian Church begins with

LUTHER (1483-1546 A.D.),

the essence of whose doctrine and the source of whose power is that God's grace is man's salvation. He found the world suffering under two wants: the want of the Bible, and the want of a worthy expression of the religious sentiment in sacred song, in prayers, in preaching. He supplied the need, and so made worship effectual to the promotion of personal piety—the one source of personal virtue and dignity; for he put the Bible into the vernacular, and he composed hymns and preached sermons overflowing with divine truth and power. By these means he commenced the renewal of modern society, not merely in its specifically religious aspects, but in all its relations and movements. The full realisation of his pure and lofty influence will be the enthronement of Christ in the heart of the world. Never did God bear a more emphatic or a more pregnant witness to himself than in the monk of Eisleben converted to the Gospel.

Having characterised Calvin, Boehme, Schleiermacher, and others, Bunsen comes to Channing, on whom he dwells as if specially attracted by a religious tone similar to his own. This

part of his valuable work I translate from the original German, the rather because Renan has given a view of Channing alike disparaging and unjust. "Etudes," p. 357 seq.

CHANNING (1780-1842 A.D.)

"Channing, a citizen of New England, and preacher to a Unitarian society in Boston until he died (1803-1842), is the prophet of the United States for the consciousness of God in the human race. He made his appearance as minister of a Unitarian church, and like Locke and the great Newton, declared himself against the Athanasian construction of the biblical doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as being un-biblical and contrary to reason. But he was far from setting an Arian creed in its place. According to his view the Church dogma is at best only an imperfect expression of biblical truth, and an insufficient representation of the revelation given in Scripture. Christianity is the divine life in human society. Christian communion reposes in the living and self-sacrificing faith which worketh by love of the brethren and of mankind at large; in divine worship, the root of true brotherhood among men. These doctrines he found in the whole Bible, especially in the writings of the New Testament, and more than all in the Gospels. The Bible contains a record of a divine revelation, setting forth not a system of dogmas, but the moral and religious ideal of humanity as realised in Christ. In his exposition of this thought you are not to expect in Channing either depth of metaphysical speculation or a specially exact historical criticism of the biblical writings. But a never-failing, sound understanding, led by the purest moral earnestness, quickened by a burning desire for the furtherance of the divine in his native land, and animated by self-sacrificing love for his neighbour, is connected in him with a thoughtful, historical faith in God's word as found in the Bible. His chief value as an interpreter of Scripture lies therefore in two particulars. The first is, that while he holds unconditionally fast to the principle of a reasonable exegesis, he finds in Scripture the normative, essential, religious substance of truth, which rationalistic Unitarians recognise only accidentally, cursorily, and within the limits of common-place morality. The other is, that human beings with their reason and conscience stand in regard to the Bible as the judge stands to his code of law; the judge, however, is mankind at large, duly ordered and developed according to families, peoples, and states. Thus, human life, accepting the Bible for substance, educes out of the letter its everlasting principles, and applies those principles to the ever-multiplying and varying interests and wants of individuals and society. Since Channing unweariedly held up those principles in earnest, bold, and popular addresses in word and in print before all whose attention he could win, he exercised over Christians speaking the English tongue an influence which can hardly be overestimated. And thus he showed himself as a man whom the old Unitarians of England distrusted (*welcomed and accepted* the writer should have said), whom Calvinists and Methodists shunned (not wholly), whom the friends and defenders of slavery feared and hated, not less on account of his prudence and moderation than his classical eloquence, which reminds one of the fine old masters; and even now, years after his death, is honoured in all parts of his great country* as an eminent Christian, as a man of simple and vivid piety, nay, as a prophet of the religion of the future.

"Channing is an antique man with a Christian heart; a man like a Greek, a citizen like a Roman, a Christian like an apostle. He is misunderstood when he is taken for a learned and speculative theologian. Had he been such he would have known how to unite the idea of redemption and reconciliation,

* Products of Channing's pen have been translated into French, German, and Italian; in England three or four editions of his works have been published; so that his thoughts are fermenting throughout the civilised world.

and he would have presented his Christ as a Redeemer in his divine majesty. This, however, is a yet unsatisfied want in the Unitarian communities of England and the United States, and probably the cause of their sickness. Accordingly we must not expect from this prophet of the presence of God in humanity any scientific solution of the problem. But that sentiment radiates from him the moment he touches reality, not only in consequence of his incorruptible love of truth and his moral courage, but also his divinely inspired conduct in private and public life. Intimately connected with these qualities is his conception of religion as a purely personal matter, and his basing all education on individual moral responsibility. If such a man whose life, corresponding to the elevation and earnestness of his words, appears before the eyes of his fellow-citizens without a stain, is not a Christian prophet of the presence of God in humanity, I know no one that is. Theologically, however, his prophetic principle is this, namely, that the Church has no other ground than Christ and his gospel, and that metaphysical doctrines are neither the sole nor the highest symbols of its fellowship. Far rather, in his opinion, is it the office of Christianity to purify and hallow all the relations of our daily life. This, the divine aim, should, he holds, be prosecuted and secured by all ecclesiastical arrangements, so as to perfect the Church and the State by perfecting the individual. Here lies his work, and here lies his importance in the world's great history."

GENERAL SUMMARY.

In a general summary of his instructive work entitled "God in History,"* Bunsen remarks:—

"We have seen the recognition of God in history manifest itself by turns under the theocratic and prophetic (the Shemitic) form and under the political and poetic (the Aryan); then the two—namely, that of Shemitism and that of Aryanism—unite and rise in the person of Jesus. From that union we have seen two great creations proceed—a new religion which comes from Judaism only as the emancipated spirit which survives the form; and the constitution of a community which has vision of God and which realises him in its life. And when these two creations were invaded and lowered by priestism, we have the same elements after a thousand years reproduce religious liberty and political liberty."

The author then reviews the qualities which characterise the Reformation, the return of hope into the human soul and into the world, the emancipation of politics and science, the re-establishment of the individual conscience and personal responsibility, down to the age of Leibnitz and the creation of a philosophy of history, whose object is to make the recognition of God living in the heart of nations a true science, at once in virtue of theory and fact, the personal independence of human beings, and the reality of the development of the human race according to a divine plan.

Among the results he obtains we specify the following.

The development of the recognition of God in time follows

* This valuable work (*Gott in der Geschichte*), "God in History, or the Progress of Faith in a Moral Order in the Universe" (Providence), after waiting ten years for public recognition, has just appeared in two forms—one an English translation (not yet complete) by Miss Winkworth; the other an epitome or condensation in French, *Dieu dans l'Histoire, Traduction Résumée*, by A. Dietz, Paris, 1868.

that of the varieties of the human race, and constitutes an historical chain by means of languages. Hence the idea of God is the point of union in universal history. The recognition of the presence of God in the universe is first revealed by the contemplation of the firmament and by the family. With the Chinese the firmament is at once thought and order, idea and will. He believes in a bond between successive generations, and accepts as a fact the presence of the Deity in human destinies.

Turanianism and Hamitism represent the next step in two directions. The recognition of God among the Turanians lacks individuality. Doubtless the spirit has made progress; from time to time it feels itself, as a moral power, superior to the material universe, but this is not its normal state; it is a momentary excitement; God is sought for not by meditation but by ecstasy. Such a principle could create neither political society, nor science, nor art. On the contrary, the religious sentiment of the Hamites (Egyptians) has the destiny of the human soul in the universe for its centre.

Reflection characterises the idea of God among the Shemites. It is a Shemitic tribe which first recognises the Eternal One as separate from all that is finite, while at the same time acknowledging him in the human heart.

Among the Aryans, perfect in language as well as literary, artistic, and political development, the religious sentiment has its full development and attains its highest form.

It is, then, certain that the recognition of the presence of God in the world is found in all the phases of history, and that religion as much as language is a spontaneous creation of the human mind.

Man feels himself led by his inmost nature and by its most urgent wants to form for himself a religion as he forms a language, in order to realise the intelligent, intellectual life that is latent in his soul. Religion, then, does not owe its birth to intention, be it the intention to deceive or to serve humanity.

The recognition of God is the primary cause of all civilisation. Therein is revealed the unity of the divine force, acting and advancing in the human race, as well as the influence of great personalities.

The progress is in the transition of the unconscious spirit of man into the conscious spirit, and of organic necessity into moral freedom, by means of individuality. This progress of the recognition of God in a race confers on it the direction of general civilisation, and, consequently, the dominion of the world. The object of the universal order in history is the fusion of successive races. Out of that fusion arises first reformation, and then advance. Consequently the salvation, or highest good of man, is to be looked for from internal religion, the religion of life, that is scriptural Christianity, freely unfolding itself.

Religion, then, is nothing else than the recognition of God. Man's individuality has its claim to existence no less than its development in true religion. As to this there is no other objective rule than the Bible, considered as the history of the rise, expansion, and refinement of the idea of God in the human race. The centre of the whole movement is Christ. A Christian community cannot exist long without giving birth to a political community, analagous to its religious constitution. While the contradiction between the Church and the State, such as they have existed and do exist relatively to each other, is insoluble, there is no contradiction between a religious community and a political community; on the contrary, they complete each other. In all the critical epochs of history there is an infallible sign of imminent ruin; it is when, in the province of religion, untruth is established as social truth, and the existence of religion is conditioned on tyranny over the soul.

All the crises of the recognition of God are political crises. Political life has prospered wherever it has appeared as a result of the sentiment of God, whether under a specifically religious form or as a feeling of moral right. This is shown by the conquests of Zoroaster and the influence exercised by Abraham, by the Greek republics, and by the Italian republics; and the duration of the political power of nations has ever corresponded to the duration of its religious sentiment; accordingly, political crises have ever had for their herald excess of despotism or degradation of public spirit; in other words, the predominance of selfishness.

True civilisation is the recognition of God embodied in people. No history shows this more evidently than that of the Greeks. Without this divine element civilisation is only varnished barbarism, which in vain tries to mask falsehood and death. Even in art the sentiment of form and measure dies with the spirit; science degenerates into the erudition of detail; literature puts exaggeration into the place of force, and emphasis into the place of enthusiasm. But especially in the home and the general intercourse of men may you see the impiety of a spurious civilisation. This decay has its source in the decay of individuality, and betrays itself specially in the decline of faith and personal responsibility. It may then be said that the ruin of religion is the ruin of nations. Immoral governments engender a very large part of earthly ills, and the higher classes prepare for themselves a heavy responsibility, and for the State ruin, in degrading the labouring classes by their conduct and their example. Against this evil all the artifices of civilised tyranny are powerless. When it attempts to stifle all that is noble and elevating by facilitating and favouring material enjoyments, then luxury becomes a pretended necessity, fashion dethrones morals, indifference assumes the name of humanity, vice is called an amiable infirmity; servility, sacrifice, and licentiousness, under police inspection, is

oaked under the sacred word liberty. Thus things went under the despotic empires of Asia and before all in the Rome of the Cæsars. Similar conduct brings similar, or even worse, consequences in a nominally Christian state. Either tyranny turns hypocrite, and then devotion is accounted useful at least for the common people, and religion is made an engine of Government. Instead of preparing the way for vital and salutary change by moral influence and example, ritualism becomes a passion, the clergy are idolised, the people lose their manliness, and society falls into the abyss at the moment when it fancies it has secured the most reliable foundation. Such is the history of several of the Roman emperors. Sooner or later the crisis comes. Justice is done, and the governors and the governed fall in common ruin; the former without any chance of rescue, the latter with the possibility, if only they listen to the voice of God as it speaks in their hearts. Witness the history of most of the European states as seen and read of all men during the last hundred years. Is Renan blind to facts and lessons known universally by all men of culture? The newspapers and the cheap literature of England are effectual counteractions to his desolating, moral, and religious scepticism.

"If our exposition of the historical development of the acknowledgment of God in man's spirit is not entirely destitute of truth, the results which we have examined ensue from the dominant facts of history with so much certainty that we have a right to suppose an eternal law as directing those facts. Induction and analogy suffice to authorise us to consider these results of general experience as valid and applicable to the actual state of things. We cannot, then, void this question: What are the consequences of the facts and results we have now set forth in regard to each one, in regard to society, and in regard to the future of our race? In other terms, do we not find ourselves in the midst of one of those crises of history, it may be even on the eve of a catastrophe of European humanity. Is the actual tendency upwards or downwards? Does everything move on to destruction or reconstruction, or is the movement complex? will the crisis bring complete dissolution, or a new and higher life? We put these questions first to philosophy, then to the political application of that science, finally, to public education.

"The task of science is to find the true method of the philosophy of history. We have already established our opinion, viz., that philology, history, and speculation united lead to the positive philosophy of the spirit; philology in accumulating and sifting facts; history in discovering and indicating the coherence and development of those facts; speculation in deducing the laws of the facts thus sifted and combined. The failure of the German philosophers to establish those laws in the way of speculation, without due regard to philology and history, proves that in order to obtain in the history of the human mind a result analogous to that obtained in cosmology for instance, it is necessary to continue to collect, sift, expound, and combine facts before you have the right to think of discovering the laws of the moral order of the universe. Now, the discovery of those laws is the great business of human science which ought not to separate itself from life, but to baptise itself therein; which ought not to limit itself to mathematics, but to embrace reality, and apply itself to the study of the past. We directly know only man and humanity, and by studying them we soon come to the conviction that their first cause is not in nature, nor in themselves, but in an Eternal Thought, that Eternal Thought, or God, which humanity in its development realises without exhausting it.

"The task of education, also, is closely connected with the recognition of God, of which it is indeed only the harmonious development. The spirit is cultivated mostly by the spirit. Accordingly, the two monuments of the spirit—language and history—are much more than mathematics and the natural sciences fit to elevate nations in what is human. The first objects of education ought then to be our mother tongue, Biblical history, and the history of our native land, connected with the culture of classical antiquity, which is our second root as the Bible is our first.

"In popular education the Bible ought to predominate; that is, universal history regarded as the area of the spontaneous recognition of God. In higher education classic antiquity may prevail, and the Bible be left to family and individual discipline. The Bible, then, should be the most general instrument of education. This is the case in Protestant lands, while in Catholic countries the free study of the Bible and independent studies in history are interdicted, a fact of incalculable import. Compare Holland and Belgium; compare the Protestant and the Catholic cantons of Switzerland.

"But Protestant educational establishments are far from being what they ought to be; in England, from the total absence of philosophical method in teaching the ancient languages; and in religious instruction in Germany, because there they ever confound knowledge and power. Knowledge by itself has no value, and bears no fruit; power, that is, knowledge digested and truly made your own so as to become to you a faculty, gives durable results. Knowledge thus apprehended alone gives and promotes intellectual activity, while mechanical knowledge does nothing but multiply passive impressions. The former produces resolute characters, the latter dreamers and babblers. Now, the recognition of God is life; life is force, and you acquire force only by personal activity.

"To replace in primary schools the manuals of 'Sacred History' by the Bible, to elevate in grammar schools the study of classical antiquity, to reserve the higher mathematics and the positive sciences for the university, to connect in the university the study of political economy with that of law, to add to all this physical education by the gymnasium in order to re-establish the destroyed harmony between the body and the soul, this is the office of the reformer of public education in the nineteenth century.

"No civilisation, no religion, without a living recognition of God! No education, unless by language, the Bible, and antiquity. No natural education without robust physical health!

"The actual form of dogma and worship does not correspond to the sentiment of God proper to our epoch. Consequently, existing religious parties must either reform or perish. That reform can be no other than this:—

"The future community will be recognised as the representative of the fundamental idea of all religion, the idea of true sacrifice. The religion must be biblical and spiritual. It must have stable elements. Never must preaching be sundered from worship. Prayer will not await orders, but bursts forth spontaneously at the impulse of God's Spirit, from the sentiment awakened by the reading and the preaching of the Word of God in the Church—the Church that knows that Christ is its king, and that elders and synods of its own choice will not shackle its freedom.

"Only the states where liberty is legally constituted can survive the actual crisis. The political crisis is become a religious one, just as the religious crisis is become a political one. Nations and states feel the want of an internal and moral renewal. The people demand more freedom from their governments; the governors exact more sacrifice from their people. Few, however, draw the right conclusion, that is, This is an inmost contradiction which must bring a universal crisis. In vain nations claim liberty, in vain government decree liberty; not on that account will it exist; true liberty supposes reciprocal confidence on all sides, confidence founded on confidence in God, and on faith in the moral order of realities. Nothing short of a moral revolution can create this confidence.

"Society not less than the State is engaged in this crisis. The opposition

between national literatures and general civilisation on one side, and religion and piety on the other, must cease; as well as the contrast between science and religion, between criticism and theology, between political liberty and religious liberty. It is only by truly social ideas and by an inmost renovation of our social life that you can successfully combat the subversive sects of the Socialists. The imminent catastrophe—religious, political, social—will be a judgment of God like all preceding crises, and will have for result a fuller and finer expansion of the kingdom of God. This has always been the consequence of each universal crisis, and God's work has yet an immense task to accomplish in each of its branches. The diffusion of faith in the Gospel has hitherto been restricted to a very narrow circle, if we do not take into account the pretended conversions of babes and peoples by the baptism of water, and not of the spirit and of fire. Moreover, that faith has not yet penetrated below the bark of life, and the greatest scientific and social problems remain to be solved. Finally, individual faith in Christ is in general nowise pure. Not faith according to authority, not a servile attachment to externalities does Christ seek. If Christianity is not a lie, the time will come when every religious man will be no longer guided except by God himself; that is, he will in himself feel the truth of Christianity. Then and not before will religion penetrate and pervade the State.

"In the same way, a time will come when absolutism in Church or State will be considered as an evil greater for those who exercise it than for those over whom it is exercised. The latter may be driven by it to find refuge in God, as well as to despair; their masters can by it make their way only to falsehood and madness.

"Finally, if a moral order exists, and if that order is reflected in the life of Christ, a time will come when war will be considered a relic of barbarism, no less immoral than unreasonable. Are the statesmen of Europe on that road? Have they attempted to prepare the way for such a state of things by a pacific alliance of Christian nations and sincere governments, by the establishment of a tribunal of arbitration, the amphictyonic council of modern humanity? However, the single fact that such a thing is discussed, and that the idea is made use of as a means of political candidature and diplomatic artifice, proves that it has acquired a certain power over men's minds.

"The victory of good on earth is the object of history. The Spirit, as a moral personality, is immortal; its progress is infinite, for in its source it is identical with the eternal and conscious thought of the universe, and it will realise that thought on earth in a course of time which no one can determine.

"With this last proposition, which cannot be historically proved, and which can be demonstrated only by the aid of speculation, we are arrived at the end of the career we traced for ourselves—at the point where history touches poetry and speculation, where analogy and induction give place to metaphysical argument. Nevertheless, we may affirm that in this averment the sentiment of God, innate in man, speaks with infallible truth. For that we need only have the same faith in reason as that with which humanity believes in its own existence and in visible reality. The historian who reflects on history is powerfully fortified in that faith in the divine instinct by the observation that the noblest tribes of humanity have been attached to it in all ages, according to the measure in which they were enlightened, virtuous, and happy. Finally, the Christian finds this faith in the depth of the sentiment of God which lived in that Unique Personality, who is not only the author but the object of our most intimate religious sentiment.


"Now, if the development of the human spirit be considered as a development of the Infinite and the Eternal in time, it will be not only progressive but infinite, according to the measure of human capacity; that is, it will form a progression the term of which cannot be fixed according to transient human opinions.

"But what will this development be if not a perpetually increasing union between intelligence and morality, an interpenetration of the true and the good always more intimate, consequently a beauty more and more perfect. Those

two, to be and to know, truth and good, are one in God; they are, too, notwithstanding our weakness, one in man. If we look a little closely we see them go, hand in hand, through history, though often disguised to the vulgar eye under the travesties of human imperfection. Those who preach this union as the true wisdom are the true apostles of wisdom; those who put that wisdom into action in their lives, be they men or women, are the true disciples of Christ, who will come in spirit to judge the world, and they will judge it with him."

CHAPTER VII.

GOD BEARS WITNESS OF HIMSELF IN SCIENCE.

 USE the term science in its most general sense, that is, as carefully ascertained and accurate knowledge. Such at least is the ideal aim of genuine science, and such to a large extent is the science of the day in whatever department it may be contemplated. Thus viewed science is, however, confined to no age. One in purpose and spirit, science is ever the highest knowledge possessed by a generation, and as that knowledge improves and enlarges with the lapse of time, so does the science of one age become the popular thought of another, while the latter passes into the science of a third, a fourth, and so onwards. In the process, however, a deposit is made which becomes the property of the race—its highest and best possession. This permanent acquirement may justly receive the name of science, since it is that exact and fully established knowledge which belongs to humanity. Here is a testimony of consummate value. If anything is true, that is true which is recognised as such by the human race at large. It follows that God is among the greatest of certainties, for God finds universal recognition. Differ men have done and will do respecting the form and the name, but the reality is one of those "First Truths" from which the human mind does not and cannot escape. This fact and this inference may be made to appear evident if, in addition to instances already given, I set forth the testimony of the race in the testimonies of a few eminent sages and men of science, the representative value of whose words no one will deny. The more popular side of this testimony may be presented in Jean Paul's words: "God has written his name on the stars and sowed it in the flowers of the field." A less metaphorical testimony to the same effect is borne by

SOCRATES

in the following argument, by which he tried to convert the atheist, Aristodemus:—

"Tell me, Aristodemus, is there any man that you admire on account of his merit? 'Many.' Name some of them. 'I admire Homer for his epic poetry, Melanippides for his dithyrambs, Sophocles for tragedy, Polycrates for statuary, and Xeuxis for painting.' But which seems to you most worthy of admiration—the artist who forms images void of motion and intelligence, or one who has skill to produce animals that are endued not only with activity but understanding? 'The latter, provided the production is not the effect of

'chance, but of wisdom and contrivance.' But since there are many things, some of which we can easily see the use of, while we cannot say of others to what purpose they were produced—which of these do you suppose the work of wisdom? 'Those the fitness and utility of which are manifest.' Consequently you think that He, who at the first made men, gave them, with a view to their use and aid, means by which they might receive sensible impressions, eyes to see what is visible, ears to hear what is audible? And what would be the use of odours had not the sense of smell been bestowed? And what perception could there be of sweet and bitter, and of all things pleasant to the taste, had there not been a tongue to act as the judge between them? Does not this, too, look like foresight and provision, how that the sight being delicate is provided with a door in the eyelids which lift themselves when needful, and close on the approach of sleep? that to prevent the winds from injuring the eye, the eyelids are furnished with a hedge in the eyelashes? that the eyebrows are placed as a penthouse to ward off any injury that might ensue from the sweat of the head? that the ear receives all sounds, but is never full? that the front teeth of all animals are such as cut, and the side ones such as grind? that the mouth through which passes all that the animal desires is placed just beneath the eyes and the nose, while the channels which convey away what is offensive are removed to the greatest possible distance from the senses? Can you hesitate to say whether these provident arrangements are the works of chance or of mind? 'Certainly not; thus regarded, they look like the mechanism of some artificer who adds to skill love for living beings.' Well, then, what do you say of their inborn love of procreation, their inborn love of preserving their young; and, in the offspring themselves, the intense love of life and the strong dread of death? 'To me they undoubtedly look like the contrivances of some One who is resolved that living beings shall continue in existence.' And are you not intelligent yourself? 'I am.' And yet you deny the Supreme Intelligence? Your body you own to be a particle of matter—but your soul is not a particle of the divine soul? and this boundless universe has been constructed not by thought, but what is void of thought? 'Yes; for I see not those powers who, you say, made all these things.' See them not! Do you with your bodily eyes see your own mind, the master of your body? and yet you think yourself justified to declare that nothing comes of mind, but all of chance? 'By no means do I disesteem the Deity, but I think him too august to need my homage.' The more august the Being that takes care of you, the more is He worthy of your reverence. 'Be assured that if I thought the gods took care of men, I should by no means neglect them.' And don't you think they do so? What! have they not given to man alone of all living things an erect attitude? and thus imparted to him power to look before, around, above, so as to avoid harm and multiply good? Other animals have feet, man alone hands; a privilege most productive of utility and happiness. Then, what other being has a tongue capable of forming words and uttering sense and sentiment? But not only has God been pleased to take care of the body, he has done far more by endowing man with a reasonable soul, which is of supreme value. For what other animal but man knows its Maker? What other race of beings worship God? What other race can so well guard against hunger and thirst, against cold and heat; can heal the sick; can make the strong stronger; can learn by study; can recall whatever has been heard, seen, or known? Most manifest is it that men, compared with other living things, live as gods—being the first in nature, in body, in soul—and yet you think the gods take no care of you? What proof of their care would satisfy you? 'If, as you say they do to you, they were to send advisers and tell me what to do and what not to do.' And when by divination they answer questions, do they not answer you? and when they speak by signs and wonders, do they not speak to you? When Greeks are taught, and all men taught, are you left untaught? Can you believe that the gods would have implanted in man a belief of their retributory providence, had they not possessed the will and power requisite for its exercise? and would not men have long ago discovered the delusion, if delusion there were? Do you not see that the

individuals, the cities, the nations that are at once the most ancient and the wisest are the most pious? My friend, you know that your mind inhabiting your body governs it at pleasure, how, then, can you deny that the Indwelling Intelligence of the universe arranges all things according to his will? Your eye takes in at one view the range and the objects of a vast landscape, why then should not God's eye have all things under its view? Your mind is able to take care of things here in Athens, and things in Egypt, and things in Sicily, and yet God's mind is unable to take care of all things? As, then, you know that by caring for others, others are willing to care for you, and by serving others you gain service, and by advising others you acquire advice, so make the trial and you will find that God honours those that honour him; and then you will know the Deity to be such and so great as at once to see all things, to hear all things, to care for all things, and to be everywhere present."

"By words such as these Socrates appears to me (Xenophon) to have led his disciples to abstain from everything base, unjust, unholy, not only when seen by their fellow-men, but also when in seclusion, well knowing that no act, nor thought, nor affection of theirs escaped the all-seeing eye of God."

The concluding words by the biographer are true and weighty. Such teachings as those of Socrates could not but avail first to show God, and then to make God feared, honoured, and obeyed.

Let the demand of Aristodemus be distinctly apprehended. He desiderates divine messengers. If only God would send him a herald of himself he would believe. This desire for not only a revelation but a revealer is very natural. The desire was in truth complied with in Socrates himself. More fully is it complied with in Moses and the prophets, and most of all in Jesus of Nazareth. Nor does this heraldry stop there. Rather is it continued and repeated in all the great religious lights of the last eighteen centuries. In a clear if less prominent manner every genuine Christian is a witness for God, raised up, taught, and sent of God himself. Accordingly, every instance we have given or may give, whether of men of science or men of the humblest rank, every instance of a truly Christ-like life is a voice from God's own lips declaring his being and providence.

We have had before us two of the first sages of Greece (Plato and Socrates), and they have spoken out the witness which God gave them of himself. I proceed to ask Rome to give her evidence from the lips of her principal philosopher and orator,

CICERO, THE ROMAN CONSUL (BORN 106 A.C.)

GOD AND PROVIDENCE.—"Let, then, citizens be from the first assured of this, namely, that the gods are the rulers of all things, that those things which are carried on are so carried on by their will and power that they confer on the human race the greatest benefits, and beholding what is each one's character, what he does, what he allows, in what state of mind, with what degree of piety he pays his worship, treat all men according as they are good or bad. Minds imbued with these convictions will never turn aside from what is true and useful. Yet what is truer than that no one should be so foolishly arrogant as, while owning reason and intelligence in himself, to deny reason and intelligence in the universe; or to assert that what his highest reason cannot comprehend is moved by no reason whatever? Nor can any one question the service which religion renders to man who reflects how many are confirmed in truth by the sanctity of an oath, what force religion imparts to treaties, how many are

deterred from crime by the fear of divine punishment, and how sacred a thing a state is when the immortal gods are venerated as at once witnesses : judges. Religion is the foundation of all law."—"De Legibus."

"If you see a large and handsome house you cannot be brought to believe, even if you do not see its owner, that it was constructed by mice and weasels; must you not then have lost your senses if you hold that a world so great, and such a variety and beauty in the skies, such magnitude and force in the sea and lands, is your own home rather than the home of the Deity."—"De Natura Deorum."

"He who does not own that the mind of man, his reason, his judgment, his wisdom, have been perfected by divine care, seems to me to lack the qualities themselves."—"De Natura Deorum."

IMMORTALITY.—"I never can be persuaded that minds live while they are in mortal bodies, but die when they have gone forth from them; nor that the mind is senseless when it has escaped from a senseless frame. Rather when the mind is pure from all mixture of body and begins to be itself, it is truly mind, and as such lives and is wise and happy."—"De Senectute."

"Think you—to speak somewhat of myself after the manner of old men—that I should ever have undergone such toils by day and by night, at home and abroad, had I believed that the term of my life was to be the period of my renown? How much better would it have been to wile away a listless being, and a tranquil, void of strife, and free from labour."—"Cato Major."

"Delightful hour, when I shall depart from this mass of pollution, and make my way to that council of divine souls."—"Cato Major."

"The blessed enjoy everlasting life. They truly live who have escaped from the chains of the body, as out of a prison; the life of the body is really death. Account not thyself, but thy body mortal. You are not that figure which I see, but your mind is yourself. The mind will fly away to its own home, and that the more speedily if, when it is enclosed in the body, it looks out of the window and, contemplating what is then before it, withdraws itself from the body to the utmost."—"Somnium Scipionis."

From ancient I pass down to modern instances, beginning with

LORD BACON, THE MORNING STAR OF MODERN SCIENCE (1561-1626).

"We return to our division of philosophy into divine, natural, and human; for natural theology may be justly called divine philosophy. Divine philosophy is a science, or rather the rudiments of a science, derivable from God by the light of nature, and the contemplation of his creatures; so that with regard to its object it is truly divine, but with regard to its acquirement, natural. The bounds of this knowledge extend to the confutation of atheism and the ascertaining the laws of nature, but not to the establishing of religion. And therefore, God never wrought a miracle to convert an atheist, because the light of nature is sufficient to demonstrate a Deity; but miracles were designed for the conversion of the idolatrous and superstitious, who acknowledged God but erred in their worship of him—the light of nature being unable to declare the will of God or assign the just form of worshipping him. For the power and skill of a workman are seen in his works, but not his person, so the works of God express the wisdom and omnipotence of the Creator without the least representation of his image. And in this particular, the opinion of the heathen differed from the sacred verity, as supposing the world to be the image of God, and man a little image of the world. The Scripture never gives the world that honour, but calls it the work of his hands, making only man the image of God. And, therefore, the being of God, that He governs the world, that He is all-powerful, wise, prescient, good; a just rewarder and punisher; and to be adored, may be shown and enforced from his works; and many other wonderful secrets with regard to his attributes,

and much more as to his dispensation and government over the universe, may also be solidly deduced and made appear from the same."—"The Great Instauration," iii, 2.

TYCHO BRAHE, ASTRONOMER (1546-1601).

"Tycho was a man of true piety, and cherished the deepest veneration for the sacred Scriptures, and for the great truths which they reveal. Their principles regulated his conduct, and their promises animated his hopes. His familiarity with the wonders of the heavens increased instead of diminishing his admiration of divine wisdom, and his daily conversation was elevated by a constant reference to a superintending providence."—*Sir David Brewster*.

JOHN KEPLER, ASTRONOMER (1571-1630).

"The magnificence and harmony of God's works excited in Kepler not only admiration but love. He felt his own humility the farther he was allowed to penetrate into the mysteries of the universe; and sensible of the incompetency of his unaided powers for such transcendent researches, and recognising himself as but the instrument which the Almighty employed to make known his wonders, he never entered upon his inquiries without praying for assistance from above. With such a frame of mind he was necessarily a Christian. The afflictions with which he was beset confirmed his faith and brightened his hope; he bore them in all their variety and severity with Christian patience, and though he knew that this world was to be the theatre of his intellectual glory, yet he felt that his rest and his reward could be found only in another."—*Sir David Brewster's* "Martyrs of Science."

In the month of October, 1604, a magnificent star suddenly appeared in the constellation of the Serpent. Great was the amazement of the astronomers, for the phenomenon seemed out of keeping with the harmony of the heavens. The variable stars were then unknown. Was the stranger's visit accidental? Was the appearance the product of chance? Kepler addressed himself to the subject. After exhausting other topics suggested by this new star, he examines the different opinions on the cause of its appearance. Among others, he mentions the Epicurean notion that it was a fortuitous concourse of atoms, whose appearance in this form was merely one of the infinite number of ways in which, since the beginning of time, they have been combined. Having descanted for some time on this opinion, and declared himself altogether hostile to it, Kepler proceeds to tell how, having failed to produce significant words in the way of an anagram by converting the letters of his own name into Greek,

"I trusted the thing to chance, and taking out a pack of playing cards, as many as there were letters in the name, I wrote one upon each, and then began to shuffle them, and at each shuffle to read them in the order they came on, to see if any meaning came of it. Now, may all the Epicurean gods and goddesses confound this same chance, which, although I spent a good deal of time over it, never showed me anything like sense even from a distance. So I gave up my cards to the Epicurean eternity, to be carried away into infinity, and, it is said, there they are still flying about, in the utmost confusion, among the atoms, and have never yet come to any meaning. I will tell these disputants, my opponents, not my own opinion, but my wife's. Yesterday, when weary with writing, and my mind quite dusty with considering these atoms, I

was called to supper, and a salad I had asked for was set before me. It seems then, I said aloud, that if pewter dishes, leaves of lettuce, grains of salt, drops of water, vinegar, and oil, and slices of egg had been flying about in the air from all eternity, it might at last happen by chance that there would come a salad. Yes, says my wife, but not so nice and well dressed as this of mine is."—"Life of Kepler" in the "Library of Useful Knowledge."

LINNÆUS, THE NATURALIST (1707-1778).

"Animals depend for their nourishment on the vegetable world; plants strike their roots into the earth; the earth circulates round the sun, the source of its life; the sun, turning on its axis, is, with the other systems of suns, infinite in number and grandeur, supported and conducted in space by the First and Incomprehensible Cause, the Being of beings, the Agent of all movements, the Architect, the Organiser, and the Preserver of the universe. This Being you may call the Orderer of the world, for all depends on him; the Creator, for of him all is born; Providence, for all the active forces of existence obey his will. He feels all, sees all, understands all, vivifies and animates all—he is all in all. This Being, without whom nothing exists, is eternal, without beginning, without measure. Only the spirit can contemplate his majesty. This only God, eternal, infinite, who knows all, I have, when scrutinising his works, seen pass before me, and felt myself overwhelmed in admiration. I have followed some of his footsteps in the universe, and everywhere, even in the smallest things, even in details which almost escape from the senses, what plenitude of power, of wisdom, and what unfathomable perfection."—"Systema Naturæ."

"What can be a greater example of infinite power than a little portion of inactive earth rendered capable of contemplating itself as the work of Infinite Wisdom, and of considering the innumerable effects of that wisdom displayed in the surrounding creation?"

SIR JAMES E. SMITH, PRESIDENT OF THE LINNÆAN SOCIETY (1759-1828).

"Design is evident throughout nature. Some who unhappily deny everything else, allow this; but it is sufficient to build everything upon. We see wisdom employed for beneficent ends. If we are indulged with powers to catch a glimpse of the divine wisdom, is it not enough to prove we are something more than the clod of the valley? But is there no design in this permission? Is it intended to call forth our powers and hopes only to destroy them? Where would be the wisdom or the beneficence of this? If natural religion goes thus far, is there no design in the further sources of information with which our Maker has favoured us? Is it not as evident in these as in the other? Nature plans the happiness, the beauty, the perfection of material beings; the revealed will of God considers the interests of immortal creatures starving amid the richest treasures of nature, if they have no hope beyond."

"The worm that crawls on the ground can perceive; the bird that flies in the air and builds its curious nest can contrive; but man only is allowed to contemplate, compare, and weigh the designs of Infinite Wisdom. The exercise of this high privilege soon brings its own reward. We cannot long walk with God in the garden of creation without admiring the beauty and partaking of the felicity which the Creator delights to bestow and to display."

"I look up to one God, and delight in referring all my hopes and wishes to him; I consider the doctrine and example of Christ as the greatest blessing God has given us, and that his character is the most perfect and lovely ever known, except that of God himself."

"A man can be no Christian as to faith who does not judge for himself; nor as to practice who does not allow others to do so without presuming to censure or hinder them."

"One advantage found in the study of nature is that it is inexhaustible;

but it boasts a greater—that it never loses its relish at the decline of life. Several botanists have continued the pursuit with undiminished fondness after the loss of sight—a misfortune one would think the most fatal to all their enjoyments. Many more have derived from this soothing study the best alleviation for the bitterest domestic losses and calamities. With what delight did Linnæus, in his last illness, turn over and over the acquisitions of his pupil, Thunberg, in Africa; and how have I seen the countenance of Scopoli, suffering under the immediate pressure of an unmerited attack upon his honour and his means of support, resume his wonted animation and pleasure in talking on the subject of botany. As a taste for the beauties of nature, or in other words, an admiration of the works of God, raises the mind and character above the troubles and cares of this world, may we not hope that such a temper of mind may be far more highly gratified and exalted in a future state?"

CERSTED, NATURALIST (1777-1851).

"The conception of the universe is incomplete, if not apprehended as a constant and continuous work of the eternally creating Spirit. The creative portion of this conception is the spiritual; the material is the product of the creative, and would cease were it possible for the work of production to cease. Throughout the universe there are beings endowed with the faculty of understanding, that they may be able to catch some sparks of the Divine Light; and God reveals himself to these beings through the surrounding universe, and rouses their slumbering reason by that Reason which reigns throughout the sensible world; nay, he gives them a deeper insight into material existence the more their own minds are awakened, and thus they find themselves placed in a ceaseless and living development, which, after having reached a certain point, removes them farther and farther from the idea that the foundation of Being is that which is palpable, and which leads them to acknowledge and view themselves, the spirits and bodies, as parts of one organism of Reason. Thus do the truths of natural science continually approach nearer those of religion, so that at last both must be united in the most intimate connection.

"Thus man, whether he has investigated the essence of truth, beauty, or good, is led to God, the eternal source of all things. To strive after the true, the beautiful, the good, is only to endeavour to appropriate as much as possible of the divine nature. Science tells us, consequently, what the friend of religion must desire, that the right way to strive after the true, the beautiful, the good, is to worship and serve God. Viewed in this light, morals become religion, while it is its highest principle that with God before us we should endeavour to preserve, as perfectly as we can, his image in our hearts.

"The inward harmony of the divine nature is Reason. Reason in activity is love. Love combined with reason is wisdom. That wisdom, as reflected in man, begets love of one's neighbour, love of one's country, love of one's kind, united with veneration for nature as the product of the Infinite Wisdom. But wisdom loves herself in her independence as truth, in her active exercise as science and art, and in her harmony as a republic of learning. As truth proceeds from God, its fountain, our love of God includes the love and the pursuit of science and art as well as of the good, all three of which are only manifestations and acknowledgments of his nature. We now perceive that, according to that same love and the love of our fellow-creatures which springs from it, to spread that knowledge still further, to whose attainment we were impelled by love, is our highest duty. And now we may understand the enthusiasm with which labourers in science have risked all that man holds dear and precious to discover truths whose value could alone be understood by the purest love of truth; and from this point of view nothing is more evident than this great experience, that in the greatest purity it has always been in the closest connection with religion, a connection which could only be temporarily interrupted by deviating on one side or the other. Hence, all men should be at once religious and scientific, and all truly scientific men are religious, and all truly

religious men scientific, at least in spirit. We must never forget that it is our spiritual nature which renders man the image of God, and that it is science which constantly develops this divine spark within us, partly by showing us our own internal being as in a mirror, partly by keeping before our eyes the impression of the Deity, which is everywhere manifested around us in nature."—"The Soul in Nature."

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT, NATURALIST (1769-1859).

No testimony to the existence and operation of God in the universe can be more important and valuable than that of Baron Humboldt. Other men have comprehended more widely and understood more intimately different branches of physical knowledge; no one, perhaps, has so embraced, systematised, and reproduced in thought and word the multifarious and stupendous whole. The results of his life-long studies he gave to the world under the significant term "Cosmos" (the Greek for beauty). Therein, indeed, he expresses both what the universe is itself, and what it is in his mind. The "Cosmos" is the beauty which comes of order and harmony in the midst of boundless variety. The very name indicates the Infinite Mind, and indicates that Mind in its essential majesty as the ultimate fount and source of all order, harmony, and grandeur. Such is the universe as seen in God. Such was it to the mind of the ancient Grecian sage. Such is it to our modern master of science. Small was the scale on which that order and beauty unfolded itself to the short-sighted Athenian. Before Humboldt the universe has expanded indefinitely, and yet so expanded as to give an assurance that what is known forms but a point in the literally boundless universe, which is ever opening more and more to the scientific eye. Yet, infinite in its impression of old, it is infinite still, but on a wider area, to loftier elevations, to profounder depths. In other words, man's conception of the infinite ever widens and deepens as he knows more of the creation of God. What a cosmos is ours compared with the cosmos of Pythagoras. Nevertheless, our cosmos will in all probability be dwarfed by that of our sons' sons. Thus does God ever unfold himself by unfolding his majestic works, which are at once his dwelling-place, his measure, and his image to man.

It was not to be expected that one so familiar with nature as Alexander von Humboldt could miss God in dwelling habitually amid his creation with eye and heart fully open. Nor has he done. Yet, as a man of science, he had to do with nothing but phenomena, and whatever else he has put into his "Cosmos" can be nothing else than the result of a certain necessity by which he was overruled, and, so to say, made to go beyond his proper function. This fact, a knowledge of which is needful to impress on the reader a sense of the value of the testimony he bears to God, finds utterance in the following words:—

"It is not the purpose of this work to attempt to reduce all sensible phenomena to a small number of abstract principles, having their foundation

in pure reason only. The physical cosmography, of which I attempt the exposition, does not aspire to the perilous elevation of a purely natural science of nature."

Humboldt, then, is not a theologian. It is not his business to penetrate beyond the veil of outer causes. Yet he has not been able to confine himself to the phenomenal; but ever and anon enters in behind the walls and beholds the Great Mechanician in his divine manipulations.

NATURE ONE HARMONIOUS WHOLE.—"The aspect of external nature, as it presents itself in its generality to thoughtful contemplation, is that of unity in diversity, and of connection, resemblance, and order among created things most dissimilar in their form—one fair harmonious whole. To seize this unity and this harmony, amid such an immense assemblage of objects and forms, to embrace alike the discoveries of the earliest ages and those of our own time, and to analyse the details of phenomena without sinking under their mass, are efforts of human reason in the path wherein it is given to man to press toward the full comprehension of nature, to unveil a portion of her secrets, and, by the force of thought, to subject, so to speak, to his intellectual dominion the rough materials which he collects by observation."

GENERAL SURVEY OF THE UNIVERSE.—"We close the general description of the phenomena of the universe. From the remotest nebulae, and from the revolving double stars, we have descended to the minutest animal forms of sea and land, and to the delicate vegetable germs which clothe the naked precipice of the ill-crowned mountain summit. Laws partially known have enabled us in some degree to arrange the phenomena; other laws of a more mysterious nature prevail in the highest sphere of the organic world, in that of man with his varied conformation, the creative intellectual energies with which he is endowed, and the languages which have sprung therefrom. We have just reached the point at which a higher order of being is presented to us, and the realm of *Mind* opens to the view; here, therefore, the *physical* description of the universe terminates; it marks the limit which it does not pass."

ASCENT FROM NATURE TO NATURE'S GOD.—"We find among the most savage nations (and my own travels have confirmed the truth of this assertion) a secret and terror-mingled sentiment of the unity of natural forces, blending with the dim perception of an invisible and spiritual essence, manifesting itself through these forces, whether in unfolding the flower and perfecting the fruit of the food-bearing tree, or in the subterranean movements which shake the ground, and the tempests which agitate the atmosphere. A bond connecting the outward world of sense with the inward world of thought may be here perceived; the two becoming unconsciously confounded, and the first germ of a philosophy of nature is developed in the mind of man without the firm support of observation. Amidst nations least advanced in civilisation, the imagination delights itself in strange and fantastic creations. A predilection for the figurative influences, both ideas and language. Instead of examining, men content themselves with conjecturing, dogmatising, and interpreting supposed facts which have never been observed. The world of ideas and sentiments does not reflect back the image of the external world in its primitive purity. That which in some regions of the earth, and among a small number of individuals gifted with superior intelligence, manifests itself as the rudiments of natural philosophy, appears in other regions and among other races of mankind as the result of mystic tendencies and instinctive intuitions. It is in the intimate communion with external nature, and the deep emotions which it inspires, that we may also trace, in part, the first impulses to the deification and worship of the destroying and preserving powers of nature. At a later epoch of civilisation, when man, having passed through different stages of intellectual development, has arrived at the free enjoyment of the regulating

power of reflection, and has learned, as it were, by a progressive enfranchisement, to separate the world of ideas from that of the perceptions of sense, he is no longer satisfied by a vague sentiment of the unity of natural forces. The exercise of thought then begins to accomplish its noblest task, and by observation and reasoning combined, the students of nature strive to ascend to the causes of phenomena."

NATURE DISCLOSES THE INFINITE CREATOR.—"The mere contact with nature, the issuing forth into the open air, exercises a soothing and calming influence on the sorrows and passions of men, whatever be the region they inhabit, or the degree of intellectual culture they enjoy. That which is grave and solemn in these impressions is derived from the sentiment of order and of law, unconsciously awakened by the simple contact with external nature; it is derived from the contrast of the narrow limits of our being with that image of infinity which everywhere reveals itself in the starry heavens, in the boundless plain, or in the indistinct horizon of the ocean."

"In considering the influences which the order and succession of phenomena may have exercised on the greater or less facility of recognising their producing causes, I have indicated that important point in the contact of the human mind with the external world, at which there is added to the charm attendant on the simple contemplation of nature the enjoyment springing from a knowledge of the laws which govern the order and mutual relations of phenomena. Thenceforth the persuasion of the existence of an harmonious system of fixed laws, which was long the object of a vague intuition, gradually acquires the certainty of a rational truth, and man, as our immortal Schiller has said—
'Amid ceaseless change seeks the unchanging pole:—

"Science the while, deep musing in cell over circle and figure,
Knows and adores the power which through creation it tracks,
Measures the forces of matter—the hates and loves of the magnets—
Sound through its wafting breeze, light through its ether pursues,
Seeks in the marvels of chance the law which pervades and controls it—
Seeks the repose pole fixed in the whirl of events."

"The feeling of the sublime, so far as it arises from the contemplation of physical extent, reflects itself in the feeling of the infinite, which belongs to another sphere of ideas."

"In reflecting on physical phenomena and historical events, and in reasoning back to their causes, we recognise more and more the grounds of that ancient belief that the forces inherent in matter, and those which regulate the moral world, exert their action under the government of a primordial necessity, and in recurring courses of greater or less period. It is this necessity, this occult but permanent connection, this periodical recurrence in the progressive development of forms, phenomena, and events which constitute nature obedient to the first-imparted impulse of the Creator."—Humboldt's "Cosmos:" Sabine's Translation.

The general effect of this testimony concurs with that of Scripture, especially as given in Psalm xix. Truly do the heavens and the earth declare the glory of God. The proclamation made in the earliest days is made still, and with a force ever increasing as the universe has opened to the scrutinising gaze of science. Nor is that proclamation one of an abstract nature. God in nature is also God in providence, and God in nature and in providence is God in the Bible and in Christ, as well as God in general history. Wondrous and transcendent this assemblage of instructional forces! By their operation the acknowledgment of God, theoretical or practical, direct or indirect, is made inevitable. Yet while those forces are overpowering, they owe their efficacy

and their dominion no less to their soft, gentle, beneficent, and invisible action, than to their disciplinary and retributory character. Indeed, they are chiefly efficient in virtue of their silent and impalpable operation. The idea of God descends into the soul in the spring shower and the warm gushes of early summer. It sinks into the soul with the coming down of sleep on our eyelids. It is called forth by the lark's morning carol, and by the glee of the healthy child. All the soft and silken ministries of home bring it on their wings. In a word, there is no pure emotion, no virtuous deed, no domestic love, no manly endeavour, no womanly endurance, and as no birth so no death in or around the family circle, which does not spontaneously and of necessity deposit, like the coral insects, some particle every day, every hour, every minute, to build up the broad, deep, and solid rock of God, which is the immovable foundation of man's inner and outer life. Thus the recognition of God is not optional, but necessary. And thus genuine atheism is impossible. The God that made and still fills and sustains the universe is against all real denial of himself. While you deny him with your lips, He compels you to acknowledge him in your heart. If you disown the name, you are forced to own the reality. Sunder yourself from your kind by repudiating "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," you are driven to some "Principle of Order," some "Soul of the World," some "Abyss, our Father," or may end with divinising physical forces under the name of laws. A universe that radiates intelligence from every part, exacts from intelligent man a recognition of intelligence either in itself or in its Author. From this necessity there is literally no escape. The sole choice you have is to accept one of the horns of this dilemma: Either the universe is God, or its maker is God.

LORD BROUGHAM, NATURALIST AND POLITICIAN (1779-1868).

"Natural theology stands far above all other sciences from the sublime and elevating nature of its objects. It tells of the creation of all things—of the mightypower that fashioned and that sustains the universe—of the exquisite skill that contrived the wings, and beak, and feet of insects invisible to the naked eye—and that lighted the lamp of day, and launched into open space comets a thousand times larger than the earth, whirling a million times swifter than a cannon ball, and burning with a heat which a thousand centuries could not quench. It exceeds the bounds of material existence, and raises us from the creation to the Author of nature. Its office is not only to mark what things are, but for what purpose they were made by the infinite wisdom of an all-powerful Being, with whose existence and attributes its high prerogative is to bring us acquainted. If we prize, and justly, the delightful contemplations of the other sciences; if we hold it a marvellous gratification to have ascertained exactly the swiftness of the remotest planets, the number of grains that a piece of lead would weigh at their surfaces, and the degree in which each has become flattened in shape by revolving on its axis, it is surely a yet more noble employment of our faculties, and a still higher privilege of our nature, humbly but confidently to ascend from the universe to its great First Cause, and investigate the unity, the personality, the intentions, as well as the match-

mighty power of him who made, and sustains, and moves those
 ies and all that inhabit them.

ance derives an interest from considering that we ourselves, who
 are most of all concerned in its truth—that our own highest
 are involved in the results of the investigation. See only in what
 ions that Newton finally reposes after piercing the thickest veil that
 nature—grasping and arresting in their course the most subtle of
 gents and the swiftest—traversing the regions of boundless space—
 e worlds beyond the solar ray—giving out the law which binds the
 in eternal order! He rests, as by an inevitable necessity, upon the
 wisdom better understood by men.

But when we consider that natural theology leads to the adoration of the
 preme Being, can we doubt that the perpetually renewed proofs of his
 power, wisdom, and goodness tend to fix and to transport the mind by the
 constant nourishment thus afforded to feelings of pure and rational devotion.
 It is in truth an exercise at once intellectual and moral, in which the highest
 faculties of the understanding and the warmest feelings of the heart alike
 partake, and in which not only without ceasing to be a philosopher the
 student feels as a man, but in which the more warmly his feelings are excited
 the more philosophically he handles the subject. What delight can be more
 elevating, more truly worthy of a rational inquiry, new evidence springing
 wherever we tread the paths of divine intelligence and power meeting
 around our footsteps, new traces of scientific inquiry, new evidence springing
 eye? We are never alone; at least, like the old Roman, we are never
 alone than in our solitude. We walk with the Deity; we commune with
 great First Cause, who sustains at every instant what the word of his power
 has made. The delight is renewed at each step of our progress, though as
 as evidence is concerned we have long had proof enough. Yet, instead
 restricting ourselves to the proofs alone required to refute atheism or remove
 scepticism, we may covet and acquire the indefinite multiplication of evidences
 of design and skill in the universe as subservient in a threefold way to purposes
 of use and gratification: first, as strengthening the foundation whereupon the
 system reposes; secondly, as giving additional ground for devout, pleasing,
 wholesome adoration of the great First Cause who made and who sustains
 nature."—"Discourse on Natural Theology," ii., 2.

PROFESSOR RICHARD OWEN, COMPARATIVE ANATOMIST (BORN IN 1800).

"Of all the manifestations of creative power, those afforded by living things
 affect our finite apprehension soonest and strongest with a sense of the
 directness of the Maker's operations. The complexity is such, the inter-
 and adjustment of the parts of the organ so exact, the finish of each consists
 tissue to its minutest fibre so surpassingly excellent, that we instinctively
 as we trace the divine handiwork. If we think to contrast under the
 scope the finest filament, or tissue, of a polished needle-point of human fi-
 tion, we are humbled by the revelation of its coarseness. The analogy
 animal organs and systems of organs to the machines of man, level
 however, so close, that comprehending and admiring the rare skill
 and purposive adaptation in many natural structures, cannot be
 studying the more refined and perfect natural structures, cannot be
 therein the exercise of like faculties in a transcendently higher de-
 mind, therefore, instinctively, inevitably rises to admiration of
 a being, power, and feeling within itself the beneficent, with
 it blesses as well as magnifies its Divine Author
 tive construction of that marvellous

human hand, felt that in describing its anatomy he was hymning the praise of the Maker. Volumes have been written, from Ray and Durham to Paley and the Bridgewater authors, filled with striking instances of purposive adaptations of the parts of created complex instruments to the effecting of definite ends. The floodgates of the heart, the valvular structures of the veins, viewed in this light, led Harvey to conceive, and experimentally to prove, the circulating course of the blood as their end and object. The exquisite structure of the eye, the transparency of its corneal window, and of the fluids which the light must traverse to strike upon the sentient carpet behind; the delicately and gradationally adjusted densities of the humours for correcting spherical and chromatic aberration whilst concentrating convergently the luminous rays; the little circular muscle, which of itself adjusts the amount of admitted light to the susceptibilities of the retina; in short, the ten thousand-fold perfections that have exhausted the skill of hundreds of microscopic anatomists; above all, that inter-cranial structure by which the operations of the visual globe have their destined effect, and the living organism sees—is not all this a manifestation, the which to know and feel must be to praise and bless the author, and magnify our conceptions of the divine power?

"May we not discern the hand of Providence in the successive floods of light thrown upon the operations of which this earth has been the seat? A Copernicus, a Newton, a Cuvier—is not an accident. Ought we not to acknowledge a gracious purpose in the making known, according to the ways and by the instruments God now chooses, so much of his power as may be elucidated by interpreters of the records in the stony rocks?

"To avoid error, a knowledge of God's power should be combined with the study of the Scripture. Yet the Scripture alone sufficeth for all that is essential to the right life here and the life to come. Christ condescends to the humblest intellect. Beware of logically precise and definite theologies, accounting from their point of view for all things and cases, natural and preternatural, claiming to be final and all-sufficient. Systems of doctrine are of human fabrication. Cease to take alarm at each new ray of light that dawns upon a field of the divine power, till now dark to our comprehension, for be assured there remain many others to be illuminated by God's predestined instruments. The light, bright as it is, contrasted with the darkness it has dispersed, penetrates but a short way into the illimitable theatre of the operations of infinite power. The known is very small compared with the knowable."—"Power of God as Manifested in His Animal Creation."

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, COMPARATIVE PHYSIOLOGIST (1867).

"I do not know that I care very much about popular odium, so that there is no great merit in saying that if I really saw fit to deny the existence of a God I should certainly do so, for the sake of my own intellectual freedom, and be the honest atheist you are pleased to say I am. As it happens, however, I cannot take this position with honesty, inasmuch as it is, and always has been, a favourite tenet of mine that atheism is as absurd, logically speaking, as polytheism."

On the subject of miracles, the same high authority says that—

"Denying the possibility of miracles seems to me quite as unjustifiable as speculative atheism."—Letter to "The Spectator," February 10th, 1866.

This is a declaration by a man of science. To deny the possibility of miracles is unjustifiable at the bar of science. What a rebuke of Renan's scientific fanaticism! Where, then, is the infallibility he claims for what he calls science, but which in reality is simply his own opinion?

FLAMMARION, MAN OF LETTERS (1867).

"The correlation of physical forces shows us God under all the transitional forms of movement. By synthesis the mind rises to the idea of a single law, and a universal law and force, which are nothing else than the Divine Thought. Light, heat, electricity, magnetism, attraction, affinity, vegetable life, instinct, intelligence, have their source in God. The sense of the beautiful, the æsthetics of the sciences, mathematical harmony, geometry, illumine those multiform forces with an attractive light, and throw over them the perfume of the ideal. Under whatever aspect the meditative spirit observes nature, he finds a pathway which leads him to God, the one living force, whose palpitations he feels under all the forms of the universal work, from the thrill of the sensitive plant to the measured and mellifluous notes of the morning lark. Everything is number, relation, harmony, uniting to reveal one universally acting intelligent Cause. In feeling the eternal presence of God, we understand the words of Liebnitz: 'Everywhere is there logic, geometry, morality,' as well as the ancient aphorism of Plato: 'God is the ever-acting geometrician.' There is a living force in nature, a mental power which orders and sustains the destinies of beings, a wisdom and an omnipotence which harmonises and upholds creation, a universal spirit which communicates itself everywhere,—and what is this but a revelation of God himself? What, if not a manifestation of the Creative Thought? What else is the elective faculty of plants, the instinct of animals, the genius of man? What is the government of life here on earth, what the celestial revolutions of suns in space, the universal movement of innumerable worlds which gravitate around a common centre, if not a living demonstration of the inaccessible Will which holds the entire universe in his grasp, and covers all our obscurities with his own essential light? What is the ideal aspect of nature, if not a pale radiation of his eternal beauty? an impenetrable splendour which our eyes, misled by the false lights of earth, do but barely descry in those sacred and blissful moments when the Divine Being permits us to feel his presence?

"The laws of nature reveal to us the existence of a regulating intelligence. 'They are,' says Sir John Herschel, 'not only constant, but concordant and intelligible.' In nature there is no dissonance, no contradiction; all is harmony.

"The grand facts of modern science have transformed one's idea of God. Ignorance had humanised God, science restores the divine attributes. Of old, God was man, now God is truly God. The Supreme Being, created in the image of man, sees that image vanish as science advances, yielding its place to reality without form. Anthropomorphism is to be rejected no less than atheism. Both exaggerations are excluded by the independent search of truth which characterises our times. In the degree in which nature is better known, man's conception of God becomes less inadequate. As our knowledge of creation does not include the absolute, so it is not included in our idea of God. Passing out of the domain of created things into that of pure spirit, our idea of God undergoes a change correlative with the forces of nature. God appears under the idea of the immanent Spirit of the universe. He is the invisible law of all phenomena. His presence is immensity and ubiquity. Time, space, succession, exist not for the Eternal One. He is everywhere and always. These are not metaphysical assumptions, but scientific deductions ensuing from the relationships of movement and the universality of law. The universal order which reigns in nature, the intelligence revealed in the structure of each being, the wisdom which shines forth from every part, especially the unity of the great whole, dominated by the harmonious law of unlimited perfectibility, sets the divine Omnipotence before us as the invisible support of the universe, as its organising power, as the essential force from which come all physical forces, and of which they are so many manifestations. God, then, may be regarded as the immanent Thought, dwelling in the inmost essence of things, organising and supporting the humblest creatures, no less than the vast systems of suns. Of that Thought, or that Mind, that Thinker, the laws of nature

are simply the eternal expression. To attempt to define that thought is simply idle. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. Yet the infinite may, for it has, cast a real, if obscure, image of itself on the cognate soul of man. This is the universal revelation of God made to his children through the universe, which is itself a manifestation of its Creator and Guardian."—"God in Nature," Paris, 1867.

JULES FAVRE, ACADEMICIAN (1868).

"This God, of whom my immortal soul preserves the indelible image—this God who reveals himself to my conscience by my reason, is a God of intelligence and truth. He has created me intelligent and free, and the first law which He has imposed upon me is respect for my intelligence and my liberty. I am faithful to him in obeying the reason which He has given me for my guide. I should be unfaithful to him by humiliating that reason before errors which it does not accept. My duty is to repulse what my reason rejects. From this arises the principle of the absolute independence of conscience already consecrated by civil law. Human reason has reached in this respect the same point as the French nation. Instructed by experience and misfortune, it makes a solemn burst of the tie with its officious tutors. It has conquered the right of managing its own affairs itself. If philosophy had the faculty of bringing materialists and atheists upon a locality thus made so free, I have the deep conviction that it would not leave a resting-place for any of their propositions, and that in the midst of the applause of grateful humanity it would force them to re-establish spiritualism and deism upon their eternal bases. But it is precisely this faculty which is refused to them. They are allowed to fight, provided they take their arms from the official arsenals. Should they take those proper to them, they are destroyed as revolutionary and impious. On the other hand, can we shut our eyes to the solemn condemnations pronounced against human liberties, and chiefly against the liberty of thought? And when an inflexible dogmatism thus annihilates philosophy, is it not a derision to ask from it conciliation and regard? I say it without evasion, the despisers of reason, whatever may be their rank and the rectitude of their intentions, appear to be more dangerous than materialist theorists, and what alarms me in a less degree is the indifference of men to their enterprise. If society were led away by them by an intuitive or deliberate adhesion, I should be less uneasy. But it has no other impulse than its own scepticism. It obeys without submitting, and allows passage for that which destroys it, for want of sufficient courage to embrace in a straightforward way that which would save it. From these arise the contradictions unfortunately too certain between appearances and realities, those cowardly associations with faults which might be prevented, that trouble so many honest consciences which ask with such anxiety for a remedy for such a painful position. Let us all descend to the depth of ourselves and we shall find it without difficulty. Let us have the good sense to shake off the mortal apathy of that moral idleness which renders us indifferent to error. Let us emerge at last from routine and apply ourselves resolutely to that which is in the domain of our reason. And after having bathed our opinions in that pure source, let us have the mature wisdom of defending them and making them prevail. Philosophic science may here be our guide. It does not desire to answer rigour by rigour, anathemas by anathemas; it only asks for the right to live, that is to say, to think freely and openly. Treating all religions with respect, it cannot, however, cede to their doctrines. Truth has nothing to fear from the control of reason. For the rest, who does not perceive the signs of an inevitable and salutary change? The genius of Chateaubriand foresaw it when he wrote the preface to his 'Etudes Historiques.' 'The political age of Christianity finishes; its philosophical age commences.' In spite of all resistance, this beneficent revolution will be accomplished. Religion and philosophy spring from God. They will unite by ascending to him by the same route—that of science and liberty. Let us hope, for the sake of our dear country, that this route will shortly be opened

before her. In the modern world, nations can only be powerful upon the condition of being free and believing. They can only be believing upon the condition of enlightening their faith by reason divested of all impediment. This conviction has been the inspiration of my soul during all my life. I have the illusion that my fidelity in combating for it is not quite unconnected with the motives which have led to your kindness. Knowing well that personally I have no claim to it, I attribute the distinguished honour to the noble flag which I am proud to hold here with a firm hand. In the glorious folds of that flag the genius of France has long united the two devices—Philosophic Liberty and Political Liberty."

Critical philosophy has a right to be heard in a court wherein science bears its testimony to God and providence. For this purpose I summon

PAUL JANET, METAPHYSICIAN (1868),

to supply a critique of Renan's system; and I summon him not only because of his distinction, but because, like Renan, he is a "member of the Institute:"—

Cosmogony. A primordial cloud by progressive condensation passes from the mechanical into the chemical condition, and from the chemical into the planetary; it breaks into divergent centres, each of which becomes a planet; one of these planets is the earth. The earth, in its turn, passes through different degrees of condensation. At one of these degrees it is capable of supporting life; at a higher degree it gives birth to humanity. Humanity, in its turn, goes on developing itself, always after the manner of the primordial cloud. At a first degree it is unconscious, and forms as it were an undivided whole; at a higher degree it divides into distinct consciousnesses individuals, pretty much as the primordial cloud broke into divergent kernels. Thus the progressive condensation of an infinite subtle matter is the general principle of this cosmogony; but if this cosmogony had no counterpoise, the progress of the universe would consist in the reduction of the whole to a single point. This was not the case. The condensation in some way brought as a result rarefaction, and in consequence fractures in the primitive sense, each of the parts nevertheless remaining subject to the law of condensation and concentration. Now the highest degree of known concentration is consciousness.

Three questions may be put to this cosmogony, which greatly resembles the physics of the Stoics:—What is the soul? What is God? What is the principle of movement? of the order and harmony of the universe?

What is the soul? We are not told what the soul is; but we are told that consciousness is the revealing sign of the soul. Consciousness is a resultant; we may infer that the soul itself is a resultant. If we take the expression resultant rigorously, this definition of consciousness has no sense, for in mechanics the resultant is the ideal line which the mind conceives as a medium

between two given directions ; but this ideal line does not exist. In this way one cannot conceive that consciousness is a resultant, for it certainly is a fact, and in consequence a reality. What is meant is that consciousness is only the result of the combination and the opposition of the cerebral forces. The soul, then, is only a result, a function of matter, yet infinitely superior to matter, as the harmony of the lyre is superior to the lyre itself, though without the lyre it is nothing. What, then, are the destinies of this soul ? Seeing that it is bound to matter it vanishes, and is dissipated with matter itself ; it loses consciousness then, which is only the resultant of the actions of the brain ; but the soul is not wholly in consciousness, it is something more. What is that something ? This we are not told. Nevertheless, this something subsists and survives. Much more, it survives in God.

What, then, is God ? The word God may have two senses—one relative, the other absolute. In the first sense God is the universe ; He is in everything, and He is more and more in what is more perfect. He is, then, in life more than in inert matter, in thought more than in life, in the consciousness of great men more than in that of the vulgar. In this point of view God develops ceaselessly ; He is not, He becomes, He is made. The highest degree of consciousness we know is the human consciousness ; but we may conceive a higher degree of divinity possible ; this would be a concentration of all consciousness of the universe in a single consciousness, in an absolute consciousness. Hence, in his "Life of Jesus," the singular dream of a possible resurrection of all consciousnesses in a final consciousness—a strange termination of that arbitrary cosmogony—a fantastic issue of that marvellous phantasmagoria which the universe is playing before us, and of which we ourselves are the spectators and the actors.

In another sense God is no longer the progress of nature always in movement. He is the infinite, He is the ideal, He is the absolute. He is the order in which metaphysics, mathematics, logic are true. We may say of him with Bossuet, Malebranche, all Platonicians, and all Christians, that He is the place and the substance of eternal truths. Admirable definition of God, if only it referred to something actually existing ! But, according to M. Renan, God, understood in this second sense, does not exist ; He is beyond the bounds of reality ; He is only a category of thought. In effect, He is the place of the absolute sciences ; but these absolute sciences have for their object nothing real. He is the absolute itself ; but nothing absolute can really exist. We now perceive, we now understand in what sense the soul is immortal. To survive in God is to survive in the ideal and in the absolute, that is, to survive in what does not exist. Sometimes M. Renan tries to give somewhat more foundation to this illusory immortality, and he leads us to hope of surviving in the recollection of our friends (recollection as fragile as ourselves), or

in our thoughts, which restricts immortality to a very small number of men, for how many of us may flatter ourselves that their thoughts deserve to survive them?

But if God is only an ideal without any reality, how are we to explain the order and the harmony of the universe?

Here we find mixed together chance and instinct in a strangely confused manner; on the one side, the Epicurean theory of fortuitous combinations; on the other, the Stoic theory of an internal vitality of nature. Two things become necessary to explain the world, time and tendency to progress.

"A kind of internal spring pushing everything into life, this is the necessary hypothesis. . . . There is an obscure consciousness of the universe which tends to make itself a secret spring, which pushes the possible into being."

Thus the soul of the universe is a sort of instinct; it is something divine, which manifests itself in the instinct of animals, in the innate tendencies of man, in the dictates of conscience, in that supreme harmony which causes the world to be full of number, weight, measure. Nature is a sort of artificer which acts by inspiration and without any science. The old Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, said the right thing when he called the principle of the universe "a dead artificer"—a fine formula which sums up not only M. Renan's doctrine, but his skill in its three most salient features—art, flame, and mobility.

Summary and Criticism. M. Renan's philosophy, just expounded, reduces itself to the idea of universal mobility and perpetual transition. Transformation and movement form his system. These two ideas lose themselves in the common idea of an absolute phenomenon which is ceaselessly transformed. Nature is only a great phenomenon which is always undergoing transformation; humanity one of the results, one of the accidents of that transformation; the individual, one of the accidents of that accident. As to the soul, it is too evident that it vanishes and falls into dust; it is no more than, to use the term, the resultant, the complex product of an incalculable number of anterior phenomena. To be just, we must acknowledge that at times he seems to allow to flit about something or another beyond, above, below, or within this floating series; it is what he calls "the infinite," or "the ideal;" but these transcendencies play so vague and obscure a part in his teachings, that it is difficult to seize what is meant, and we feel at liberty to consider them as concessions to public opinion and to habit, rather than real principles knowingly and scientifically recognised.

In this infinite chain of phenomena, of the why or the how which we know nothing, how comes it to pass that at a given moment there is produced a certain mechanism of phenomena, a certain system, which seems by consciousness to detach itself from the great whole, and to oppose itself to the rest, as a force capable

of action and reaction. How does this complicated mechanism, that is, man, who is only an effect or a collection of effects, succeed in imposing on himself the illusion that he is a cause, even to the extent of having no other idea of cause than that which he gets in the consciousness of his own action? How can he ever have the idea of action? A phenomenon does not act, it is *acted*, as Malebranche forcibly said: "A phenomenon is the product of an action, not the action itself. Were man only a phenomenon, or a collection of phenomena, he would never have the idea of action, but by the very fact he would have no idea, for to think is to act."

I understand your saying that man is bound to the great whole, and Spinoza is not wrong when he writes that we are not "a kingdom in a kingdom." Nevertheless, without being an independent and sovereign kingdom in the universal empire of nature, man may be a citizen therein; which is not possible if man is not something by himself, if he has no personality, and if he owes everything to what is outside himself—if, in a word, man is only a product, for then he has nothing internal, nothing spontaneous, nothing which can be a principle of liberty or an object of right. What if this assemblage or combination of phenomena, which you call man, is only the result of the blind and unconscious activity of nature? But I leave on one side what is inexplicable in the idea of blind forces producing this work so marvellously ordered; I am satisfied with repeating that man thus formed by assemblage and combination has no centre; now, how can such a being be self-conscious?

Interiority to self (if consciousness may be thus defined) is a fact so extraordinary, so original, so unexpected, in this graduated series which is called nature, it so stands apart from the rest, that you must have a strange philosophic predetermination if, with the dogmatism of our critic, you advance the proposition that consciousness is a resultant and that man is a product. This is exactly what you ought to demonstrate. It is not enough to develop the idea of an evolution of nature brilliantly; everybody knows that there is an evolution, or at least a ladder (scale) in nature. Aristotle and Leibnitz declared the fact before Hegel did. The question is, whether in this development there are not *hiatus* (gaps or pauses), discontinuities; whether nature, in unfolding itself, follows a continuous line, or whether at certain points it does not leap over certain intervals to enter on a higher order. *A priori*, it is no way necessary that progress should take place by insensible transformations. The creative or productive (whichever it is) power can quite as well manifest itself by diversity of forces and agents, as by unity of force and agent. It is, then, for you to show that there are no *hiatus*, and that the evolution is unbroken. Now, there are two gulfs yet impassable to science, analysis, experience—the gulf between brute matter and living

matter, and that between living matter and thought. These two abysses have not been crossed by the Hegelians any more than by those who made the trial before them; all they can do is to avoid them, and letting men believe, by saying nothing about them, that they do not exist.

All these conceptions have their origin in an irregular application of a principle dear to Leibnitz, and one of the finest in metaphysics, the principle of continuity; but this principle, when properly understood, is only the principle of gradation and progress. It signifies solely that nature acts by degrees, that it does not rise to a form except after having exhausted the entire series of inferior forms, that each degree of being contains something of the preceding and something of the following. Moreover, that these successive degrees are distinct the one from the other, and even that there may be in them wider intervals at certain points of the scale, is no way opposed to the principle of continuity, for if you will carry the principle to its end, you will be drawn on not only to universal identity but also to universal immovability. It would not be enough to say that one phenomenon is bound to another, which is like it; that others result similar from the second, and so on; you must go as far as to declare that they are the same, strictly the same: if so, then diversity is impossible. If you affirm that it is the same phenomenon, but with something more, I ask you whence that addition? Between this addition and the anterior phenomenon is there not an *hiatus* (an opening), a *saltus* (a leap), whatever you may do? No, you will reply, we pass from one to the other by insensible shades. No matter; let it be shades, quarter shades, ten thousandth parts of a shade—these are powerless diminutives; wherever there is diversity, there is solution of continuity. Between two shades I can always suppose an intermediate shade, and others after to infinitude. Nature, then, never passes from one shade to another; if it resolves on diversity, it must make a jump, however short the distance. This being the case, why not admit intervals of essence as well as intervals of degree? And to return to the point in question, why must conscience be simply the continuation of an anterior state, and not the appearance of a new force? But a new force is precisely what is called the *soul*. Why, in this new force, the highest manifested to us by nature, may there not be an entirely new mode of activity—that is to say, liberty? And why may we not suppose other forms of activity superior to those, and finally an absolute force enjoying in the highest possible degree and form, being and agency, distinct also from all secondary and subordinate forces, just as they are distinct from one another? I know that after having established the distinction, it would, if possible, be necessary to explain the union; but you do not explain by suppressing; you do not solve a problem by mutilating it. To reduce all the forces of nature

to a single one, and to explain everything by the insensible transformations of one and the same substance, is to return to Thales and to the juvenile philosophy of the early ages of the Greek culture, it is to take account of no step in the progress accomplished by thought from that brilliant and productive period, indeed, but devoid of experience.

There is, however, a phenomenon in which diversity seems to be in accord with continuity; this is movement, for in movement the object never ceases to move, whether it moves in a straight line, a circle, or a spiral, whether it moves slowly or rapidly. Now, at present philosophy tries to explain everything by movement, and the advances of physics are, it must be said, entirely on this road. Nevertheless, suppose that movement itself did not give rise to new problems; suppose, if you will, that it explains all physical nature, including vegetation and animal life; I say, that still there is a point at which you must acknowledge an *hiatus*, a *saltus*, an interval; at this point consciousness and thought commence. For a movement to give birth to a thought is inconceivable. In vain you declare that it is the same thing with the difference of within and without, that thought is movement seen within, and movement thought expressed without; these are mere metaphors, but signify nothing to the understanding. Whatever Spinoza may pretend, a circle and the idea of a circle are two very different things; thought is not to movement as the concave is to the convex.

It is not to be denied that a serious objection is put forward to spiritual philosophy. This philosophy, it is said, reposes only on our ignorance. Wherever causes escape from us, it introduces as many different entities as there are unknown causes. Finding no experimental line of transition from brute matter to life, it invests a being which it calls vital force; unable to explain thought, it invests a spiritual force which it calls soul; unable to explain all the causes of our actions, it supposes free will; not seizing the internal knot by which all natural phenomena are bound together, it detaches this force by abstraction, and calls it God. Thus each spiritual affirmation is only a confession of ignorance, they are names given to all the unknown things presented to us by the problem of nature. The spiritual philosophers do not see that they take the announcement of this problem for a solution. Doubtless there are unknown things in nature, but these unknown things will not cease to be unknown when you have called them vital force, soul, free will, the First Cause. These are but names, which leave the phenomena as much unexplained as they were before.

I remark that this objection is not very strong, except when you begin by *a priori* supposing that all the phenomena of nature are produced by a single force, and are necessarily explained the one by the other; but suppose, I beg you, what has in it nothing

contradictory or absurd, viz., that there are in nature distinct forces of different and unequal order, what other means have we to ascertain their existence than to observe the difference of the phenomena which manifest them, and then, where those phenomena shall appear to be irreducible, to affirm the irreducible separation of the causes. The reduction of all the laws of nature to a single law, of all the agents to a single agent, is declared by Auguste Comte himself a chimerical and anti-scientific hypothesis. Why take as admitted so arbitrary an hypothesis, and because on two or three points means have been found to reduce and simplify causes, why affirm in an absolute manner that so it is at all the degrees of the scale of nature? Be it so; some one will say, but then acknowledge that your separations, your distinctions, are purely provisional, that they present only hypotheses proportioned to the number of observed facts, and be quite ready, in presence of this or that contradictory experience, to renounce your hypotheses. Doubtless, I answer, we are ready. For example, the day when science shall find means to demonstrate spontaneous generation, we will bend before this demonstration, and we will renounce the hypothesis of a vital force,* but for thinking force, what, I pray, is the demonstrative experience which could reduce us to silence? I see only one, namely, the artificial production of a man endued with feeling and thought; the *homunculus* of Faust, such would be the *ultima ratio* of that Unitarian philosophy which is set in opposition to us. But is there any philosophic mind which, through scientific precaution, would make it a duty to renounce all affirmation until such an experience had been attained? I add, that if spiritualism is right it is impossible for it to demonstrate itself by experiment. It must, then, be content with indications at its disposal. The sole are the data of consciousness. Now, we can only repeat what we have said before, that the analysis of consciousness always give us a unity of subject, and never allows itself to be reduced to the idea of any combination whatever.

As to the nature of the first cause, if there is a philosophy which lies open to the charge of realising abstractions and invoking occult qualities, it is that which ascribes to nature an instinct, which invests it with poetical faculties, which demands, as a necessary postulate, a "tendency to progress," it is the philosophy of M. Renan. Or, again, it is the philosophy which

* A distinction must be made between spontaneous generation and what is now called heterogeneration. In the true idea of spontaneous generation life must arise from the simple contact of mineral elements; but if life arises only from death, that is, from organic tissues that have already lived, which is heterogeneration, a fact of the kind, if demonstrated, would prove against the individuality of animal species in the low degrees of the scale, but not against the hypothesis of a vital force, for you would not have reached the primitive phenomenon of life. Yet it is solely in this last sense that spontaneous generation has still some partisans.

takes the first cause "an axiom," "a creative formula," which, at the origin of things, supposes what it calls "the first abstracts," and reduces these abstracts to their "abstract quantity," "concrete quantity," "suppressed quantity;" that is, the philosophy of M. Taine. These two philosophies take abstractions for realities, nominal causes for real causes. What, I beg, is this "instinct of nature?" Do we explain the order and harmony of the universe when we have referred to some obscure, blind, unconscious tendency? Is not this to explain a fact by the fact itself? Is not this to fancy you explain a fact when you have given a name—"instinct," "tendency," "stimulus,"—to the unknown cause which you seek? As to the "first abstracts," the "creative formula," the "first quantity,"—"abstract," "concrete," or "suppressed"—what philosophic mind can be satisfied with such scholastic logomachy? M. Taine, who has tried to restore the empirical and sensualist school, ought to remember the fundamental rule of that school—not to take abstractions for realities.

If the school of Locke, of Condillac, of Destutt, of Tracy, of Mill has merit, it is a horror for abstractions metamorphosed into realities. Now, what would these philosophers say of a formula that creates, of a law that is a cause, finally, of that abstract pneumatology which suppresses cause, substance, the soul, and God, only to put in their place empty forms, void frames, forms and frames more empty than the numbers of Pythagoras and the ideas of Plato?

M. Renan has avoided to make his philosophy itself the object of careful study, and just and full exposition. Mixing it up with languages, history, and other things, he has partly effaced, partly confounded most questions. He thus announces principles without proofs, affirms instead of discussing; and these rapid affirmations of his, which devour difficulties and preclude objections, pass with superficial readers for ascertained and demonstrated truths. There is at the present hour an anti-supernaturalist breeze. By sailing on that side, and filling your sails with that breeze, you have an easy and prosperous voyage. Opinion does not require you to reason well, nor even to reason at all, but to speak as it speaks. But it is more easy to go down the current than to return:—

"It seems as if philosophy was destined to ceaselessly oscillate from without to within, from within to without, from the me to the not me, and reciprocally. Man, whatever he may do, always seeks himself, and is interested only in himself; but now he seeks himself in himself, and now in what is not himself. We may apply to him this remark of Montesquieu: 'When I have lived in the world I have thought I could not endure solitude; when I have lived in retirement I have thought no more of the world.' Now, at the actual moment, the human soul is occupied on the outside of itself; it seeks itself in all places where it is not—in the

external world, in animalism, in its own body. It has scruples being incredibly modest touching itself; it fears to be elevated in separating itself from the external world, in distinguishing itself from body, in believing in a divine and immortal destiny, in invoking an absolute moral law, in affirming abstract rights. All these great beliefs are very near appearing to it superstitions, illusions, deceits of the imagination. It puts them away as importunities, and seeks with a morbid curiosity by what bonds it touches matter, how diseases of the brain are maladies of thought, what it has in common with animality, how in nature higher degrees arise out of lower ones. In literature, in politics, in history it everywhere seeks what cheats and dupes, the little by the side of the great, and explaining the great, the physical explaining the moral—accidents stronger than law—and finally, the fatal laws of climate, race, organisation, superior to those ideal laws which philosophers persist in setting forth in vain and empty sciences called morality and natural right. Such is the movement which bears away public opinion at this hour, and there is little in it to be proud of.

“But if the law which we have mentioned before is true, if man ever goes from himself to things, to return from things to himself, be not afraid, I would say to the spiritualists, who are uneasy at seeing themselves surpassed, and, without having wished it, transferred from the party of movement to the party of resistance; be not afraid, in twenty years, in thirty, who can tell? in fifty, perhaps to-morrow, an opposite movement will set in; there will arise a daring thinker who will discover the soul, and restore the dignity, the beauty, the originality of our nature and our part in creation; he will teach us to look not below but above ourselves. This revolution has never failed, and it will not fail any more in the future than in the past. A hundred times men have tried to believe Plato was a dreamer, and that his ideas were chimeras, and a hundred times the ideas of Plato have returned to illuminate the human soul, and to restore to it hope and serenity. At this very moment, notwithstanding the rush of positivist studies and the critical and empirical method, Platonic faith is not wholly cast aside, and that appeal to the idea, vague as it is, which we find in all M. Renan's pages, is still a vestige of Platonism. Another thinker, more metaphysical than M. Renan, has attempted to give a scientific demonstration of both the necessity of an ideal for the human mind and its non-existence in the order of reality. I do not mistake, nor do I disdain these traces which attach the new philosophy to Platonism and spiritualism; but this doctrine of an ideal, which is not real, does not appear to me a satisfactory middle term; it is either too much or too little—too much for positivist minds that admit only facts; too little for true idealists, who desire an intelligible and divine world, the living and existing type of the sensible world. Nevertheless, this last worship of the

l, howsoever insufficient, is still a guarantee and a pledge that
tual ideas will not perish."—"La Crise Philosophique," Paris,
5; also "La Revue," 15th July, 1864.

"Thou art, O God, the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see ;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from thee.
Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine !

When day, with farewell beams, delays
Among the opening clouds of even,
And we can almost think we gaze,
Through golden vistas, into heaven—
Those hues, that make the sun's decline,
So soft, so radiant, Lord, are thine.

When night, with wings of starry gloom,
O'ershadows all the earth and skies,
Like some dark, beauteous bird, whose plume
Is sparkling with unnumbered eyes—
That sacred gloom, those fires divine,
So grand, so countless, Lord, are thine.

When youthful spring around us breathes,
Thy spirit warms her fragrant sigh,
And every flower the summer wreathes
Is born beneath that kindling eye :
Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine."—*Moore.*

DAVID HUME'S (1717-1776) EXPERIENCE OF BEING "WITHOUT GOD."

As a contrast to this tone of living and grateful piety, I place a
words which painfully describe the state of mind that follows
loss of God, whether theoretical or practical. The words
are from the pen of David Hume, the philosopher and his-
torian :—

"I think I am like a man who, having struck on many shoals, and
narrowly escaped shipwreck in passing a small frith, has yet the
fury to put out to sea again in the same leaky, weather-beaten vessel. My
cry of past errors makes me diffident for the future. The wretched con-
fusion, weakness, and disorder of the faculties I must employ in my inquiries
are my apprehensions ; and the impossibility of amending or correcting
these faculties reduces me almost to despair, and makes me resolve to perish
on the barren rock on which I am at present, rather than venture myself on
the boundless ocean that runs out into immensity. This sudden view of my
situation strikes me with melancholy. I am affrighted and confounded with
the forlorn solitude in which I am placed in my philosophy, and fancy myself
a strange, uncouth monster, who, not being able to mingle and unite in
society, has been expelled all human commerce, and left utterly abandoned
and inconsolate. Fain would I run into the crowd for shelter and for warmth,
but cannot prevail with myself to mix with such deformity. When I look
abroad I foresee on every side dispute, contradiction, anger, calumny, and
contumacious contention. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and

ignorance. Every step I take is with hesitation, and every new reflection makes me dread an error and absurdity in my reasoning. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favours shall I court? and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me, and on whom have I any influence, and who have any influence over me? I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of every member and faculty."—"Treatise of Human Nature," i., 4, 7.

This self-description is of a kind to call forth deep commiseration. Not willingly has the writer brought himself into so sad a condition. But the sense of privation and want which it implies is preferable to the self-satisfied and defiant dogmatism of Renan.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOD BEARS WITNESS OF HIMSELF IN THE LITERATURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND IN ITS PRINCIPAL PERSONAGE, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

PART I.—THE SYNOPTICAL GOSPELS.

SOME forty years ago I was conversing in a bookseller's shop with a solicitor of high and varied literary culture, when my eye fell on a handsomely-bound copy of Dr. Lardner's works, in the ten-volume edition (London, 1827). "There," I said to my companion, "is a book you should put into your friend's library that you are furnishing." "What for?" "It is the recognised defence of historical Christianity." "Indeed? It is a curious religion that needs ten large volumes for its defence." At the moment I felt the reply harsh, if not rude; but it deposited in my mind a seed that has not been unproductive. In truth, it produced an immediate effect. The previous Sunday I had preached a discourse, undertaking the proof of Christianity by proving the authenticity of its literature, especially the Gospels. Fresh from collegiate studies, in which Lardner held a high place, I had drawn my materials from that valuable storehouse of ecclesiastical learning. The sermon was received by its hearers in recumbent attitudes and with closing eyes. I became sure I had failed in my purpose. Distressed with the result, I was not unprepared to meditate seriously on the solicitor's reply. The consequence was that the next Sunday I delivered a discourse on Christianity as self-verifying. The introduction contained these words: "Last Sunday I set before you the scholar's argument for our holy religion; I now ask your attention to the argument of 'the wayfaring man.'" In setting forth the several considerations, I, of course, dealt with what is technically called "the internal argument for the truth of Christianity." I received my reward in the earnestness manifested on every side as I proceeded with the sermon.

I have put this anecdote into the foreground in order to introduce in a pointed manner the question of method. All along we have been dealing with facts that for the most part are open to all eyes, and appreciable by all minds. Even our appeal to the Bible has been not of a scholarly, but a popular character. Appealing to the reader's intelligence and religious affections, sympathies and wants, I have set before him traces and indications of God's presence and action, which I was sure he could not fail to acknowledge. All at once I am brought to a stop. Approach-

ing the literature and the religion of the New Testament, I find myself standing in front of a thick forest. That forest I have spent years in endeavouring to penetrate. At length I feel myself, in my own private thought, in a measure at home. But how am I to communicate the feeling to others? If life-long studies have been needful for the result in my own case, I must abandon as simply impossible the hope of aiding my readers to form an individual and independent judgment in the issue. And thus we are thrown back on Roman Catholicism. The Protestant principle of individual judgment is a deceit. You cannot believe in a book two thousand years old without believing in a priest—a priest either of the literary or the sacerdotal order. And whom do I mean by "You." I mean the reader, I mean men in general, and in honesty I cannot exclude the writer. In matters of scholarship I am perpetually relying on external authority. So does every other student. How much more must this be the case with the bulk? Yet the bulk it is that specially needs culture. If, then, you make religion depend on external authority, you renounce Protestantism and give your hand to Romanism. Indeed, the act is suicidal. He that makes religion depend on a literature, betrays the cause he undertakes to espouse.

There never was a period when a clear perception and frank acknowledgment of this truth was more needful than the present. Biblical scholars have now been busy for nearly a century in the most diligent, faithful, and searching review of the authenticity of the literature of the New Testament. The real result, I venture to say, has done little to alter the ancient judgment of the Church as to the historical character of its contents. If a fair and impartial revision of the Canon were to-morrow to be made by competent learning, what proportion of the literature of the New Testament would be set aside as spurious? I speak within narrow limits when I answer, "Not one hundredth part." In giving my reply, I have in view not the extremes of the learned world, but the average of authority. Let us hear its verdict: The three synoptical Gospels, brought into their present state between 65 A.D. and 75 A.D., contain materials which go back to eye and ear witnesses of the Lord Jesus, and bear the stamp of originality and spontaneousness. Matthew, Mark, Peter, and Luke are their historical vouchers. The authorship of the fourth Gospel is a question on which the highest scholarship remains undecided, while no truly religious mind can deny that the book overflows with the finest and grandest spiritual truth. The Book of Acts, whose origin is for the most part referrible to Luke and Paul, and whose contents bear on so large a scale signs and tokens of historical reality, came into its present condition in the era already denoted—an era which was so prolific as to have produced the greater part of the substance of the New Testament. Of the fourteen Epistles of Paul, four—namely, Romans, 1st and

2nd Corinthians, and Galatians—are universally ascribed to that Apostle, while nearly all critics, except the extreme school, admit the authenticity of the rest. I do not include the Epistle to the Hebrews—as it is called; but though its authorship is undecided, no sound critic of any school would pronounce the Scripture spurious. The Epistle of James is of apostolical origin, though the name of its writer is not finally ascertained. Of the two Epistles ascribed to Peter, the first, and probably the first eleven verses of the second, are authentic. The three Epistles ascribed to John are so intimately mixed up with the question touching the author of the fourth Gospel as to shun an independent judgment, but the first, at any rate, is apostolical in contents and spirit. The short Epistle of Jude is surrendered. The Revelation, also connected with questions regarding the fourth Gospel, was probably written by—not the Apostle, but another John, shortly before the death of the Emperor Nero, in the year A.D. 67.

Of the literature whose history is thus described, how much *must* we pronounce unhistorical? The Epistle of Jude, containing five and twenty verses. To this verdict of condemnation may probably be added some fifty or sixty verses ascribed to Peter. The remainder of the New Testament was produced in three ages; (1) the age of Jesus, when the words which fell from his lips and the deeds which he performed were treasured up as precious deposits in the hearts and minds of his auditors, or written down on tablets or note books by the same class of persons; (2) the age of the Apostles, when the words and deeds thus preserved were collected, compared together, and communicated to pupils of the Apostles mainly by word of mouth, first in the original Aramaic spoken by Jesus, and then in Greek, the universal language of culture, conversation, and literature; (3) out of these sources, one in substance, but varying in particulars, the present books were gradually formed during the period above indicated, namely, from 65 A.D. to 75. Now, if we place the death of Christ about A.D. 30, then within from forty to fifty years after his death the contents of the New Testament came into existence. Whatever deduction may in fairness have to be made in respect of John's Gospel and Peter and Jude's Epistles, as well as in respect to certain particular passages objected to by criticism, this verdict is substantially correct. This being the case, the historical foundation of Christianity is perfectly solid and safe for all divinely intended purposes. Here is an ever-living and now all but (in relation to the earth) omnipresent witness to the certainty of those things wherein the world has been instructed (Luke i., 1-4), which beyond a question took place in the reigns of the first emperors of Rome, from A.D. 30 to A.D. 67, and which underlie, as partly its cause partly its effect, the present culture of the civilised world.

I cannot stop to either expand these general statements, or to

illustrate them in their several consequences, or even to show the naturalness and reliableness of such a literary genesis. I revert to the reason of its introduction, and declare that notwithstanding this solidity you must not build thereon the Church of Christ. One reason for this inhibition is sufficient. Individualism is the underlying feature of the religion of Jesus, and individualism is incompatible with an historical basis, be it ever so sound and solid. The absurdity of making all men critical historians before you make them Christians! But this is man's method, not God's. God does not wait till his children have each become a profound astronomer before He bears witness of himself in the material cosmos. As little does He allow man's religion to depend on books. Books, like all good things, may feed religion, but they do not generate it. All true religionists all over the world as through all ages have been "taught of God." Everything truly divine has, even on its surface, divine features, and therein God himself bears witness of its divinity. By this test must all forms of religion be tried. Nay, by this test they are and have been tried, and in the degree in which they stand this test they work God's work, and both deserve and receive man's acceptance. Apply this Ithuriel's spear to Christ and Christianity, and you will find by the result how fine and clear its touch, how reliable its answer, how benign its moral and religious effects.

How true it is that the historical method is of man and not of God appears from a deduction from what has just been advanced, which can scarcely have escaped the reader, namely, that the Church is the parent and not the child of its own literature. With that birth the Church was some fifty years in travail. During the whole of that time the Church was without its literature, or possessed it only in fragments. Yet there the Church was. Born on the day of Pentecost, it was continually adding to its numbers, its strength, and its efficiency, so that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that Christianity was founded apart from the agency of books. What founded Christianity, then? God's Holy Spirit working in the minds and lives of Hebrews and Greeks of the first half of the first century. That which founded it has perpetuated it, and still extends it over the globe. Here and here only is the one spirit and power of Christian truth. This, and nothing short of this, justifies me in teaching, and can effectually aid you in learning, Christianity. If God in Christ does not bear witness of himself to you, you have no solid religious foothold as a Christian. Let not the assertion be taxed with superstition. Alas! that some who think themselves *par excellence* intelligent should be so ignorant of the real nature of religion and the real nature of evidence as to lift their voices against a proposition which, simply proceeding on man's divine origin and sonship, declares that the Father speaks to the child in terms the child can understand, appreciate, welcome, and obey, and that

such instruction being an appeal of intelligence to intelligence, and spirit to spirit, and love to yearning, and fulness to need—in a word, of the Divine Creator to his human offspring, is reliable—no less reliable than acceptable, and no less beneficial than beyond a doubt. Yes; here is certainty; the sole certainty of which man is capable, but certainty so certain that it cannot be questioned without questioning the eye that sees, the ear that hears, the hand that handles, and the memory which collects and records results the most varied, permanent, and satisfactory. Of all the great powers which work over us, in us, and for us, religion, the religion of Jesus, is the most certain, for it is either the root or the fruit of the tree of human life. And, as this religion, so every other, is pure, benign, and true in the degree in which on the one side the divine is genuine and intense, and on the other the human is simple, natural, and vigorous. When God in his sanctity works with man in his purity, the product is the highest, the noblest, and the most real of all products within the reach of our cognizance, or conceivable by our imagination. Hence it follows that the denial of the religion of Jesus is the denial of intellectual, moral, religious, and even physical law—for these are but various aspects of God in operation. It follows, also, that the religion of Jesus needs no extrinsic evidence. To be loved, it, like virtue, “needs but to be seen.” And it is a question of love, not conviction. Conviction appeals to the head, where religion is only a lodger; while love appeals to the heart, where religion is at home. Father and son are the ever reverberating octaves of true Christian psalmody. Hence, I should as soon think of proving my wife’s love, or my child’s fidelity, as I should think of such impertinences as courses of evidence on Christianity—except as an antidote. Home is in a sad case when a father’s integrity has to be proved. Not less is the Church truly in danger when men, instead of confidently and joyously pointing to its massive and immovable foundations, and relying on the sure reply of the head and heart: “What manner of stones, and what manner of buildings!” (Mark xiii., 1) proceed to dig up these rocks in order to lecture thereon, proving to the outer eye that verily they are stone, granite it may be, stone of the hugest size; but verily nothing more than stone, because displaced, rent from their true position, they have neither proportion, nor symmetry, nor beauty, nor meaning, nor use. Wise men will let God’s stones remain where God’s hand laid them, and be content with pointing them out with the emphatic and instructive exclamation:—“What manner of stones, what manner of buildings!” Indeed, so convinced am I that everything divine attests its own divinity to every reasonable and undistempered mind, that proof in religion is with me an object of suspicion, so that the offer of it is distasteful, and the effect of it to occasion doubt rather than confidence. All I want is to see

myself, and to aid others to see and contemplate the ineffable and overpowering beauty of God's own truth in its own naked simplicity, apart from the distortions and obscurations of any human atmosphere, whether in my own moral weaknesses, or my own intellectual prepossessions, or those of others. Thus to see, and thus to contemplate it is to love, desire, adore, obey, and this is religion; nor religion only, but strength, peace, joy. If such things are not realities, reality has no place on earth. Here, and in full, here only God bears witness of himself in the religion of Jesus Christ, and in all other forms of religion in the measure in which they resemble it in essence and in operation.

THE ONE RELIABLE CRITERION OF DIVINE REALITY.

Here, moreover, we are presented with a test of divine truth, which is certain in its word and universal in its operation. That test is man's sense of the divine. That sense, varying ever in purity and power, never loses its genuine and essential virtue, but becomes more automatic in its application and certain in its report, as man's character ripens, refines, rises, and while becoming purely human, becomes also truly divine. When "God as He is and man as he should be" unite, certainty and bliss are the offspring. With a view to such an issue, I have taken pains to describe God and man in their genuine and self-attested characters. The description puts into our hands a criterion of what is human and what is divine, separately and in conjunction, which we shall find of value in what ensues. For the human element, I may trust to the reader's own consciousness. The nature of the divine I shall sum up in

THE VOICE OF HUMANITY DECLARATORY OF GOD.

If, as we have had abundant reason to believe, God bears witness of himself in the universe, then the deeper intuition of God which the human race has had, and has of God, is not only its idea of God—the object of its adoration and the source of its power—but the one great truth of the human heart, and the one great proclamation of the human voice, touching God and providence. Now, as ancient authorities assert "names are things," the names of God denote God, and in man's apprehension God is what his name declares him to be. What, then, is God? The question has been repeatedly answered, and is mooted here only to revive the information at a point where it is about to be made of service. What is God? The answer is made in three alphabets, which cover and represent, as the culture, so the religion of the globe. The Sanscrit (Aryan), the Phenician, and the Hebrew (Shemitic)—whence have sprung all other alphabets and literatures. Of that answer, the substance is conveyed in four radical sounds, viz. :—

Div (<i>Divine, Deus</i>)	Hud (<i>Good, God</i>)	Pa (<i>Paternal, Father</i>)	Ya (<i>Yehovah</i>)
LIGHT.	HOLINESS.	LOVE.	SELF-SUBSISTENCE.

"Jehovah, Jove, or Lord."

Of these elements, the first three are Aryan, the fourth Shemitic in origin. Taken together, they speak for the eventual unity of the four—that is, for the oneness in source of all the languages of civilisation. What, then, do these, the tongues of our race, say as to God? They say that while the Hebrews declared the essence of God, *i.e.*, his self-subsistence, the Hindoos and their descendants declared his attributes. According to the witness which God bears of himself in the hearts of his human family, God is then the one self-subsistent, holy, loving, and light-giving Creator of all. Now, of self-subsistence we have no positive experience, and can judge only negatively and analogically. But we know what is morally and spiritually luminous, holy, loving, and our own personal conceptions of these divine and human realities form in union our test of the divine, so that we lay down the rule that whatever is luminous, holy, and loving in a transcendent degree or manner, that is divine—there you see a radiation of God, a manifestation of his glory, a declaration of his will, a divine call and claim on your heart and life. The whole process takes place in what men call conscience. There God speaks to you of himself, no less than of your own duty. Listen reverently, obey implicitly, and live; disregard the divine speaker, and die. This is the law of the moral universe—this is the voice of God—this is certain, irreversible, and changeless truth. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." He that hath no ears, or dull ears, to hear, let him sell all he has and make the purchase.*

APPLICATIONS OF THE CRITERION.

1. The first application which I make of the test thus acquired is to assert the claims of history, in contradiction to those of legend; as maintained by Renan. These are his views:—

"History is but forty years old, as when before this age do I find the immediate sentiment of the past."—"Essais," pp. 106, 107.

Yet Renan's philosophy owns nothing but history, for reality is gone except as the shadow of the past.

"The nineteenth century has for its characteristic the substitution of the historical method for the dogmatical method in all the studies relative to the human mind. Literary criticism is now nothing more than an exposition of the diverse forms of beauty, that is, of the manners in which different families and different ages of humanity have resolved the esthetical problem. Philo-

* The important doctrine here taught is more fully developed in "Christ the Interpreter of Scripture," by John R. Beard, octavo, 10s. 6d., published by Whitfield, 178, Strand, London.

sophy is now nothing more than a statement of the solution proposed to solve the philosophical problem. Theology can now be only the history of efforts spontaneously made to resolve the divine problem. In truth, history is the necessary form of the science of all that is subject to the laws of changing and successive life. The great progress of criticism has been the substitution of the category of *becoming* for the category of *being*, the conception of the relative for the conception of the absolute, movement for immovability. Formerly everything was considered as being; men spoke of philosophy, right, politics, art, poetry in an absolute manner; now, everything is as coming into being."—"Averroes," pp. 7-10.

While the substance of things is thus resolved into history, and true history is described as of recent date, history has a companion whose name is legend, the product of the imagination by which man is deceived, yet from which are born heroes, religious founders, and even God.

"Let us not attempt to banish legend, since such is the form which the faith of humanity assumes of necessity. Humanity is not composed of philosophers and men of science. It frequently deceives itself, or, to speak more correctly, it deceives itself necessarily on questions of fact and person; often it misplaces its homage and sympathy; more often it exaggerates the part of individuals, and accumulates on the head of its favourites the merits of entire generations; to see what is true in all this there is need of knowledge and discernment such as do not belong to it. But it does not deceive itself as to the object of its worship. What it adores is really adorable, for what it adores in the characters it has idealised is the goodness and the beauty it has itself put into them. It may be affirmed that if a new religious appearance were to be produced myth would find a place in it, in the timid measure suited to our age of reflection. Whatever pains might be taken to repel whatever was alien to the purest rationalism, the second generation would doubtless be less puritanic than the first, and the third still less. Thus there would be introduced successive complications in which the great imaginative instincts of humanity would give themselves full career, and in which criticism would again, at the end of some centuries, find occasion to resume its labours of analysis and discrimination."—"Etudes," Pref., xxii.

The influence of legend is universal. It affects every form of religion, the highest not excepted :—

"There is no great foundation which does not repose on legend. The only culprit in such a matter is humanity, which wishes to be deceived."—"Vie," p. 256.

Legend itself is backed up by deceit.

"History is impossible if you do not fully admit different degrees of sincerity. All great things are done by the people, and the people you cannot lead unless you lend yourself to their ideas. But he who takes humanity together with its illusions, and seeks to act both on and with it, cannot be blamed. Cæsar knew very well that he was not the son of Venus; France would not be what it is if a thousand years ago men had not believed in the sacred vial of Rheims.* Easy is it for us, powerless as we are, to call this a lie, and proud of our timid honesty to treat disdainfully the heroes who have accepted the struggle of life

* The bottle containing the consecrated oil used in the anointing of the Kings of France, and which was believed to have been brought to Saint-Remi by a dove for the baptism of Clovis.

on other conditions. When, with our sincerity, we shall have accomplished what they did with their lies, we shall have a right to be severe upon them. At least we must make a broad distinction between societies such as ours, in which everything passes in the open day of reflection, and the simple and credulous societies in which sprang the beliefs which have ruled the age."—"Vie," p. 216.

"The immense progress made by the Gospel comes from its exaggerations."—"Vie," p. 316.

"Difference of time has changed into something very offensive to us, that which constituted the power of the great founder, Jesus, and if ever the religion of Jesus grows weak in humanity, it will be in consequence of the acts which created belief in him. The founders of Christianity lived in a state of poetic ignorance at least as complete as that of Sainte Claire and her three companions. Such is the feebleness of the human mind that the best causes are ordinarily never gained except by bad reasons."—"Vie," p. 258.

We have now, patient reader, got into a very different sphere from that which we occupied a few minutes since. Did I not fear to wound your best feelings, I should have translated much more of the same kind. However, like all great religious founders, "Christ has his legend," and that legend, founded on the smallest modicum of fact, is made up of and owes its success to illusion, collusion, and delusion. This gross misrepresentation has its source and its necessity in Renan's denial of God and providence, as creating and ruling the world. See, then, to what such scepticism leads. Here are its natural fruits. If those fruits are bad, bad is the tree whence they come. Let their repulsiveness be your warning. To deny the miracles is, it appears, to impeach the sincerity of Jesus, and to make his disciples a band of falsifiers, at once cheated and cheating.

The detestable morality of these passages, anything worse than which was never uttered by Jesuitism, is too apparent to need a word of exhibition, and sufficiently repulsive to explode the averments with which it is connected. Yet, I feel bound to evince the unreliableness of one or two of the leading statements. And, first, not history but Renan's philosophy of history has a past of less than half a century. Were the two identical, not the biblical history alone, but the history of the great Eastern and Western empires in ancient days, as well as all modern history down to the beginning of the present century, would be a confused mass of fact and falsity, ignorance and imposture, which, doing little else than mislead the past, can afford no guidance to the present or the future. Accordingly, in vain did Herodotus, "the father of history," write a history of the world some five hundred years before Christ. In vain did Thucydides describe the Peloponnesian war. In vain did Livy compose the history of Rome. Tacitus has no claim to accuracy and reliableness in his Roman annals. Niebuhr and Arnold might have saved themselves the trouble of distinguishing history from legend; and Grote, Froude, Freeman, and a score of other eminent historians, had they first gone to school to Renan, would have retired from

so bootless a task as theirs the moment they had discovered its real nature, tendency, and result.

That legend did exist in the past is beyond a question. Herodotus has his full share, yet in such a way that much of what was once deemed visionary recent studies have shown to be real. However; what competent student ever hesitated to discriminate between the legend and the history in their most marked and important instances, or failed to sift the few grains of chaff out of the great mass of wheat? Processes so sweeping and so inculpatory as those of Renan are unknown to real scholarship, and carefully shunned by true philosophy. There are legends and legends, and there are soils and soils. "Yes," says our critic, "and the worst soil is the East, and the worst legend the religious." This impeachment of the East has no ground except in that confusion of mind which identifies the faded and worn-out society of Syria in the present day with the young, fresh, and vigorous society of the same land in the days of Moses, David, and Jesus. A similar blunder is committed when the religion of Jesus is confounded with the religion of modern Rome—the former a natural product of the working of the holy spirit of God in the purest of human spirits, the latter a rank product of a soil which had spent its healthful forces and taken into its bosom refuse and abominations from all quarters of the globe. Only by a special and daring contradiction of facts could the disciples of Jesus have been described as ignorant. Of course, I understand how everyone is ignorant that does not own the negativism of the last form of Gallic infidelity. Only those are well informed, only those are able to discriminate truth from error who have sworn an oath of fidelity to this modern Pythagoras, whose word is law as well as gospel. Yet, measured by a just standard, the Apostles and their immediate followers were of all men of their day least unfitted to receive and propagate the religion of Jesus. The age was one of comparatively special enlightenment. The conquests, first of Alexander and then of the Romans, had combined with the general tendency of Hebrewism to diffuse much of the best and most reliable information of the day throughout Western Asia, and specially in Palestine, while its northern province of Galilee, being the highway of commerce in its passings from the east to the west, became a circle not of trade merely, but of the free thought and mental activity which trade never fails to bring. The district of country which had the lake of Gennesareth for its centre may not inappropriately be termed the Lancashire of Judea. Accordingly, Galilee proved the stronghold of Hebrewism in its terrible conflict with the empire of Rome. There grew up the bravest native troops, there the struggle was renewed when it had broken down elsewhere, and there fastnesses were held with a prowess as honourable and heroic as it was persistent and all but unconquer-

able. And all this social movement was going on at the very time when the assumed legend was in the way of formation. From the days of the first Herod to those of the last, the whole land was ploughed and sowed by Greek culture under a Roman form. Even the sceptical philosophy which contributed so much to the decline and fall of the Roman State had transplanted itself to the soil of Judea, and manifested by means of Sadduceism its scornful hostility to the rising religion. Again and again has Renan demanded a court of inquiry on the supernatural in the New Testament. As if nothing of the sort had occurred in the Jewish Sanhedrim, nothing of the sort on Mars' Hill, nothing of the sort in Antioch, and generally in the flourishing cities of Asia Minor, in every one of which those babblers would find materialists enough to question, though, as the result shows, not to extinguish the new and supernatural faith. These are not the social conditions under which legend loves to grow. Like the mushroom, it prefers a dark atmosphere, a rank soil, a motionless position. I have fixed the period of the production of the New Testament literature, in its fragmentary origin and its literary completeness, as, in general, lying between A.D. 30 and A.D. 75, and perhaps all antiquity does not present an age or a state of society less favourable to the growth of legend. Legend does not wait on the troubled steps of social struggle, nor on the sanguinary steps of internecine war; but, if at all, it delays for the "piping times of peace," when the imagination is at leisure to decorate the half-forgotten past in plumes of its own invention. This ornamentation was, indeed, thrust on Christianity, but not till ages afterwards, when the Apocryphal Gospels were produced out of Hebrew superfetations and Gnostic dreams, so as to produce caricatures of the Evangelical originals.

It is more easy than honourable to bespatter a religion or a character. The undignified office has been assumed by Renan in the words which precede these strictures. Even with his blind aversion to the supernatural, he might have been expected to abstain from vituperation until he had found some real or apparent facts to serve at least as a pretext. That he has adduced nothing of the kind, as bearing on the earliest Christians, is a convincing proof of their innocence. Yet, what would be in such a case deserved blame, becomes, when groundless, unmitigated defamation. And yet, surely, it must have cost a man of letters some effort in art, some pain in reflection, to utter the innuendoes and the direct imputations previously quoted. I make these remarks, not so much to reprehend the injurer, as to vindicate the injured; and with this view I emphatically declare it unwarrantable to libel character without an iota of reason or occasion, in fact, but simply on the general principle that every religion owes its vital and moving forces to legend.

Here, too, the Heavenly Father bears witness of himself, if in

a retributory manner; for the charges made against his cause tacitly assert a groundwork of fact, and no small degree of success, as accompanying the efforts by which it was laid. The fact was in part natural, and in part supernatural. Denying the latter, the critic is compelled to leave the former, and most people will think that the removal of the supernatural only augments the value as well as the amount of the natural. Thus, while endeavouring to damage Christianity, Renan finds natural law too strong for him, and he is made to yield a testimony when he only meant to strike a blow.

I totally repudiate what is said about "different degrees of sincerity." Sincerity is an absolute quality, and can no more admit of degrees than one can be one and a half, or a triangle verge toward the form of a square. As black is black and white white, so sincerity is *sincerity*, and any deviation therefrom has its own and its sole name as *insincerity*. If, then, Jesus and his disciples departed ever so little from the straight path of sincerity, they unavoidably set their feet on the crooked path of insincerity. In other words, they were impostors. And impostors were they while pretending to represent the God of truth and to carry forwards the cause of truth. Nay, at the very moment when Jesus was engaged in this desecration and trickery, he repeatedly charged the principal rulers of the land with hypocrisy; adding, on one occasion, these dreadful words: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" (Matt. xxiii., 33.)

Yet these are among Renan's "heroes." "Heroes" who live and who succeed by guile, by adulating the people, by humouring their fancies, by falling in with their prejudices—in a word, by gulling them! The proper name for such heroes is scoundrel. "Too harsh?" No; I speak the truth; and if I speak the truth honestly, I speak none the less in love. The issue is too serious to admit of compromise.

"But this is the sole way of success." Then abjure the success and keep your conscience. To fail is no disgrace; to succeed is no honour, except your means are honourable.

"Ancient times and modern times vary." Doubtless, but morality ever remains morality, and duty knows no change, no qualification. Moreover, their sanctions are invariable, so that immorality brought of old the very ruin that it brings now.

"Everything now passes in open day." If the words have meaning, they say that it was easier to cheat in the days of Christ than it is now. The people then were so credulous! Almost any one could lead them by the nose! Truly, a dignified office this for "heroes." Morality, however, declares that the easier the delusion, the lower the deluder.

"Say what you will, hence came the beliefs which have ruled the ages." In other words, religion, and specially the Christian

religion, is the base offspring of fraud and folly. A strange birth, surely, for a power which has renewed the face of society, by renewing, invigorating, and guiding its moral sense!

The success is owing to the "exaggerations of your Christianity." Say, rather, that the exaggerations connected with Christianity have been its bane, and that had it not been truly human and fully divine, it must have long since perished, if only by the hands of unwise advocates.

"It is useless to attempt to banish legend; it will come, and philosophy must correct it." I do not see the force of that "must." If legend is inevitable, criticism is supererogatory. Why should philosophy, whose prerogative, you tell us, is supreme and disdainful indifference, trouble itself with so fruitless and idle a task? Nay, philosophy cannot, as it does not, wish for success, for legend is the finest thing in the world. Hence, poor humanity's light, solace, support, glory. Hence, too, its God and its worship. Hence, moreover, its heroes and its achievements. Better extinguish its history than its legend; the former is very small, very young, very unimportant—quite a weakling; the latter is the benefactress of our race! Who can hesitate which to put an end to? In fact, while everything is becoming history, history itself is contracting its dimensions, so as, at least in the matter of Jesus, to become an almost invisible point.

Why, then, did you attempt to write the "Life of Jesus," and whence these thousand pages which make up the two principal editions of your book? and whence, too, the materials of your sample volume on "The Acts?" Are the books produced out of next to nothing? Wonderful skill; still more wonderful morals!

We have reserved a choice specimen of reasoning to the last: "If ever the religion of Jesus grows weak in humanity, it will be in consequence of the acts which created belief in him." That is, in one word, "The legendary in the religion of Jesus will be the death of it." And yet legend is natural, inevitable, admirable, not to be destroyed; indeed, it is indestructible. And humanity, a silly fool of old, is a silly fool still, and that to such an extent as to be sure to legendise a pure religion should it by some chance obtain one. So, then, our logician declares that, all essentials remaining the same, the very power which gave life of old takes away life now; for, if Christianity ever dies, it will die of the hand whence it received its existence.

The hurly-burly of Renan's religious writings are a natural product of logical confusion such as this.

II.—THE CRITERION APPLIED TO THE SYNOPTICAL GOSPELS CONSIDERED AS SUPPLYING MATERIALS FOR A LIFE OF CHRIST.

No; not inconsiderable are the Scriptural materials we possess for the high and sacred task of composing a life of Christ. Not

o urge that the work has been accomplished, at least, in a manner that augurs ultimate success,* God has not left himself without a witness even in the camp of negativism. I allude to

THE SYNOPTICAL JESUS OF STRAUSS.

An opinion widely prevails that the historical credibility of the Gospels having been undermined by recent criticism, the life of Christ itself is no longer a certain and reliable reality. This is a great mistake. If, indeed, the gross misrepresentations of Renan had any solid foundation, the mistake might be excused. According to him, what is certain in the evangelical history is very small. And yet his view is commonly supposed to have a greater historical residuum than that of Strauss. It is true that in theory he supposes an historical substratum to occasionally underlie what he calls the legend, but the assumed historical element is either so inconsiderable in fact, or is so travestied by the critic, as to be of little or no value. Particles so small and so disjointed neither do nor can constitute even an outline of the life of our Lord. Indeed, were they larger and more numerous, they would, under his treatment, never reproduce anything of an historical kind that would correspond either to the original or the indubitable exigencies of the case, as they appear on the broad page of general history. His main defect, however, is one of principle. Avowedly he constructed his "Life of Jesus" under the prevailing influence of what he calls "divination," and what most critics would call conjecture. Actuated by a foregone conclusion adverse to the supernatural, and having fancied a life of Christ in which his own preferences and tastes are embodied, he subjects such materials as his criticism spares to a handling so free and so arbitrary as to bring forth a caricature instead of a history. Indeed, what he calls "The *Life* of Jesus" is little else than a pure fiction, interspersed with names, words, and dates taken from the Gospels. Such a *life* was never *lived* by any being on this globe. Unreal as a whole, it is equally unreal in its constituent parts. Some one has said that poetry is the art of saying anything on any subject. Certainly, Renan's divination is a divining rod, capable of any and every travesty that a rank imagination can devise, or an over-riding philosophy can exact. To criticise such a production would be a work harder and longer than the twelve labours of Hercules. At the utmost, only a few separate instances can be scrutinised in the way of specimen. And the only

* See "Das Charakterbild Jesu, von Dr. D. Schenkel," 3rd ed., 1864; translated into French, "Jesus—Portrait Historique," Paris, 1865; and into English, "The Character of Jesus Portrayed," by W. H. Furness, D.D., Boston (U.S.), 1866. A complete "Life of Christ," of high promise, is begun in "Geschichte Jesu von Nazara," von Dr. Theodore Keim, vol. i., Zurich, 1867. The author is already well known, and highly valued for previous publications bearing in the same direction.

sufficient answer would be a life of Jesus constructed on sound principles of historical composition, and especially apart from any abstract and speculative theory whatever. Such a life will be written. Now, for a long time suitable materials have been accumulating, and when the philosophical negations and the theological rationalisms of the day have had their run and died of exhaustion, some masterly genius, deeply imbued with religious insight, as well as sternly led by a love of historical reality, will fuse those materials into a great whole, the verification of which will be, (1) its profound harmony with God in providence, (2) its internal consistency, and (3) its thorough sufficiency to account for the origin and spread of the Christian religion. While we wait for so desirable a result, we are not without means for counteracting the deadly poison put forth by modern materialism, which does not know how to respect even so grand, simple, and momentous a reality as the life of Christ.

One of these instruments is put into our hands by the pantheism of no less a personage than Strauss himself. It may seem strange to such as know Strauss only by acquaintance with his first or original "Life of Jesus" (*Leben Jesu*, A.D. 1835), that solid aid should be expected from such a quarter. But Strauss has as much of German earnestness as Renan has of French frivolity. While, then, the latter produces a romance, the former puts forth something like a history. True, his history is extremely defective, as will appear hereafter. But then the cause of the defectiveness is avowed and known. It lies not, as with Renan, in the lack of historical materials, but, here agreeing with Renan, in a deeply-rooted anti-supernaturalism. Great, however, is the difference produced when the last element is removed from the works of the two. Take from Renan his legend, and you find only a few grains of history. Deny Strauss his myth, and you still find yourself in possession of a substantive historical outline.

The fifth book of his "New Life of Jesus" contains what Strauss himself calls

AN HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

The substance of this I lay before the reader. Unless when compelled by necessary regard to condensation, I give the English equivalents of the author's original. Actuated by the same consideration I omit large portions occupied in discussion on what with the writer are disputed points. For instance, though denying the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, the critic almost always compares its narrations with the corresponding ones in the synoptics, impeaching and even occasionally controlling the latter by the former. The whole of this matter I omit, as I endeavour scrupulously to limit my report to what Strauss himself accounts in the main certain and reliable.

Preparation—John the Baptist. We possess only incomplete

information as to the moral and intellectual condition of the Jews of Palestine in the age which precedes Jesus. Yet, by combining these particulars with the ample details in our hands respecting the general civilisation of the world, we acquire results which are all but sufficient, and which leave over the origin of Christianity scarcely more mystery than at every great historical epoch, at every revolution of art, science, religion, politics, hangs around the person of the hero, the founder, of him who by his vigour and genius occasioned the explosion already long prepared. Christianity was the quintessence, and, so to say, the fruit of the finest sap that had, down to its publication, circulated in all the branches of the great human family. True, it grew up on a Jewish soil, but not until that soil had been enriched and saturated by foreign elements, derived alike from Western and Eastern culture. And while it was a necessary preparation that the Hebrew people should have been brayed in the mortar of history, it was equally needful that Alexander, at the head of the civilisation of his day, and the Roman conqueror with his irresistible legions, should have gone before and opened a high road of intercourse among the nations, and a path along which Christianity should make its way into the heart of the earth. While Judaism and heathenism are the two principal factors in the case, and while Judaism had undergone severe discipline at home, it received from Babylon influences which, coming from various oriental quarters, gave shape and colouring to its external form. The whole may be summed up in the statement that while Judaism sought for God, heathenism, under the guise of Hellenism, sought for man. The two desires found an answer in Jesus, who, coming from God to man, brought man back to God. This was his aim, and this his work. The aim and the work were the natural product in the soul of Jesus of the religion of his people, particularly as expressed and represented by the prophets. That class of men having outgrown the low notions of their countrymen believed in one God, the maker and governor of the universe, who, as being spirit, could not be acceptably served by bloody sacrifices, and demanded the sacrifices of a pure and grateful heart as well as of a virtuous life. The demand was little heeded by a sensuous people given to externalities of worship, and beaten about almost like a football by the conflicting monarchies that rose around them. Yet, out of those adversities, a hope and a promise were born. The religious teachers of the nation foretold better days—a bright and ever brightening future, to be inaugurated by some distinguished personage, a second and greater David, who should free Judea from her oppressors, and set up in the land the kingdom of God, making Israel the ruler of the world. Two very different elements enter into the Hebrew conception of this happy triumph. One, the higher, prophetic element, makes it spiritual; the other leaves it sensuous in all its

branches and fruit. Both views centred themselves in a personage expected to come, who received the name of the Messiah. With these, the Messiah, a lineal descendant of David, was to be a conquering prince; with those, the Messiah, resembling David in founding a more glorious and durable empire, was to ascend his throne along a path of humiliation, suffering, and sorrow. This religious constituent of the Messianic idea was qualified and often overborne by the political one, which prevailed almost alone in the popular mind. The latter, intensified by the persecutions which the Maccabean insurrection attempted to avenge, and by the Roman usurpation of dominion in Judea, became a burning furnace of political disaffection in the days of Jesus, which the Pharisees fed in public, which the Essenes privately fanned, and which the Sadducees tolerated. The general result was a social volcano ready any moment to burst forth in fury. Of the three parties just mentioned, the first were superstitious and hypocritical, the second monkish, the third sceptical. Accordingly, the Pharisees led the people, the Sadducees conducted the government, the Essenes solaced the discontented. While thus divided and distracted internally, the Jewish people suffered under what they accounted the abomination of a pagan tyranny which, hated by the people and their Pharasaic leaders, and sedulously shunned by the ascetic Essenes, was respected and courted by the worldly and fashion-loving Sadducees. Solely in the cells of the contemplative and secluded Essenes could Christianity find an element kindred with itself, and that element recalls the image of John the Baptist rather than that of Jesus of Nazareth.

During two centuries anterior to the time of his appearing there had been growing up in Alexandria, in Egypt, an intellectual and religious school, of which Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, may be accounted the representative, and in which the philosophies of the West were wedded to the religions and speculations of the East, producing in their union an amalgam which, with the aid of allegory, accommodated the old Hebrew thought to the rationalism of the day, without materially affecting any of the great currents of social force.

While in Israel God was thus revealed to man, man did not there rise into his full stature, nor take his proper position. This benefit he received at the hands of Greece; especially as represented by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Nor did Stoicism fail to contribute to the formation of Christianity; for while, equally with the Israelites, those three philosophers restricted humanity to men of Hellenic blood, the Stoics taught that all men, as sharing in intelligence, were essentially equal. Nor can some service be denied to Epicurus, since his pleasure, being peace and satisfaction of mind, closely resembled the unshaken firmness enforced by Zeno, the Stoic. Even the manifest impotence of the internecine philosophies of the day, by making men weary and heavy laden

under a sense of want, created a desire for new light, which on one side seduced thousands to the delusions of magic and superstition, yet occasioned in myriads a hunger and a thirst for real religion eminently conducive to the success of Jesus. Nor must we forget the practical sense of the Roman world, which, ever seeking empire, ever sought reality; and so taking good, wherever found, became eclectic in spirit and act. The result may be seen in Cicero and Seneca, in whose writings you find ideas of God and man so pure and elevated as to have given rise to the story that the latter kept up a correspondence with the Apostle Paul.

It was in this state of society that John, surnamed the Baptist, appeared. Concentrating in himself the deepest religion and the sternest morality of Israel, especially as represented by Essenism, he was the intermediate agent which determined the birth of Christianity in Judea.

John the Baptist appeared in the desert of Judea (Matt. iii.), in the land lying on the west of the Dead Sea, where the Essenians possessed numerous establishments. Like the Essenians, who were satisfied with the poorest food, John lived on locusts and wild honey. The baptism which he administered reminds us of the sacred ablutions to which they attached so much importance. "Change your mind, the kingdom of God is at hand." Such was the substance of what John taught to the multitudes who flocked around him. The principal persons he, like Jesus, had in view were the dominant sects of Pharisees and Sadducees. When he sees them approach he suspects them of guile, as wishing to escape from divine punishment by means of an external rite. Accordingly, he assures them that nothing but moral rectitude can profit them. Their boasted descent from Abraham confers on them no immunity. In undergoing baptism they must confess and renounce their evil ways. Hence, it is seen that with John immersion was a symbol on the side of man of true repentance, and on the side of God of merciful forgiveness. Put together for Greek and Roman readers, the particulars supplied by Josephus touching John differ from the Evangelical accounts without contradicting their substance.

The necessity for an immediate moral reform is urged by John on the ground that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Those who do not change, or only feign to change, are threatened with terrible punishment. They are the chaff which the Messiah will, with his winnowing fan, separate from the grain and cast into the fire; they are the unproductive tree, which he will cut down and burn (Matt. iii.; Luke iii.). Long before, several prophets had declared that the people of Israel would be tried by fire under the eye and hand of Jehovah himself (Zach. xiii., 9; Matt. iii., 1). Since the happiness of the Messianic era was made dependent on moral worth, all those who remained disobedient must be scourged

by Divine Providence. The rest, those who justified their baptism by newness of life, implicating a change of heart, would receive from the coming Messiah baptism of the Holy Spirit. Had not Joel already announced that in the days of the Messiah God would pour forth his spirit on all flesh? (Joel iii.)

This rule of the Messiah is not expressly mentioned by Josephus, but when you know his prudent way of throwing those national views and hopes into the shade, as being objects of suspicion with the Romans, you discern the idea under the veils with which it is covered by his hand. What does the historian tell us? Not only that John exhorted the Jews to unite in baptism, but that his preaching called together tumultuous crowds, and that Herod put John to death from fear of an insurrection. The whole indirectly points to the Messianic idea, the inexhaustible source of Jewish sedition, without, however, necessarily ascribing a political part to its representative. Doubtless he, the judge and Saviour, was about to come. In making this proclamation John did not designate Jesus personally. Had he made such a recognition, he would have felt that his mission of preparation was at an end, and he must have retired before the messenger of the New Covenant; whereas, he continued his ministry, and when in prison sent disciples to inquire whether Jesus was the Messiah. Traces of John's influence are found in the synoptics and the Acts (Matt. ix., 14; Mark ii., 18; Luke v., 33; Acts xviii., 24 seq.; xix., 1 seq.). Faithful to the precepts and the example of its founder, John's school observed practises very different from those which Jesus introduced among his disciples. Like the Pharisees (Matt. ix., 14), those of John observed frequent fasts, which Jesus on the contrary disapproved, on account of their tendency to abuse, and because they were among those externalities which he had come to abolish. Their respective modes of life throw into view a similar contrast. John had occasioned clamour by his abstinence, by the rigour of his asceticism, and by his stern isolation; Jesus was reproached for his geniality, and his intercourse with men of all kinds (Matt. xi., 18; Luke vii., 33 seq.). How, then, could the Baptist, with views so narrow and prejudices so ascetic, have acknowledged for his superior, for him whom he was sent to announce, the same Jesus whose spirit was so dissimilar? By what he did, and by what he did not, John appears to us a genuine Essenian, although we do not discover the bonds which connect him with that order. On the contrary, Jesus, after having assimilated all that was good and true in the views and tendencies of Essenism, rejected its narrowness and illiberality, so as to appear to the Baptist a disciple that had lost his road, rather than a master to be honoured and obeyed.

History of Jesus. Jesus was born in the small town of Nazareth, situated in the province of Galilee. During his whole

life he is called Jesus of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth (Matt. xxvi., 69, 71; Mark i., 24; xiv., 67; Luke xviii., 37; John i., 46; vii., 41; xix., 20). The last designation survived him (Luke xxiv., 19; Acts ii., 22; iii., 6; iv., 10; vi., 14; xxii., 8; xxvi., 9), and passed over to his disciples and followers (Acts xxiv., 5). His father was a carpenter by trade. He himself bore the name of the Carpenter's Son, or the Carpenter* (Matt. xiii., 55; Mark vi., 15). His parents were named Joseph and Mary. The latter survived her son (Matt. xii., 47; John xix., 25; Acts i., 14); but the former does not appear after his son's childhood. Jesus had brothers and sisters (Matt. xiii., 55; Mark vi., 3). The names of the former were James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. All that is known of the latter is that they dwelt at Nazareth during the public ministry of their brother. On one occasion his mother and brothers came, and standing without, asked to see him while teaching, when, alluding to his disciples, he replied: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. xii., 46; Mark iii., 32; Luke viii., 19). But we are not to infer from these words that Jesus was on ill terms with his family. After Jesus' death, Mary and her sons, together with the Apostles, constitute the kernel of the infant community (Acts i., 14; 1 Cor. ix., 5). James, in particular, is one of the three columns, and even the head of the Jerusalem Church (Gal. i., 19; ii., 9, 12; comp. Acts xiv., 13; xxi., 18). James appears to have held strictly Jewish or Ebionitic views. Jesus did not consider himself to have been a lineal descendant of David.

Little that is certain is known of the education of Jesus. He appears in the Gospels as one "taught of God." In his boyhood he questions the learned in the law (Luke ii., 41); while his handicraft did not exclude Rabbinical study (Acts xviii., 3), his being called Rabbi, or master, is not enough to prove that he received the bringing up of a scholar. Apart from his internal

* The newspapers have lately (Sep. 9, 1868) been circulating a paragraph to the effect that Jesus was not a carpenter, but a mason. The reason assigned is that the houses of Palestine were built of stone. The allegation taken in its generality is incorrect. Houses were built of clay (Job iv., 19), and of brick (Is. ix., 9), as well as stone (Is. ix., 9; Lev. xiv., 40). Wood also was employed—sycamore (Is. ix., 9), cypress, acacia, olive, cedar, and sandal (1 Kings x., 12; 2 Sam. v., 11). The last passage decides the question, for there the carpenter is distinguished from the mason, who, in the Hebrew, is described as a "hewer of the stone of the wall." Besides, a civilised people require carpenters for a hundred things besides house-building. Justin Martyr speaks of Jesus thus: "While among men he fashioned carpenters' work, *ploughs and yokes* (for oxen and horses). Indeed, the original Greek term used in the New Testament denotes not to hew, but to make, to produce, even to create; as giving form, substance, and in some way individual existence to brute matter. Hence, the cognate noun is the word rendered child in Scripture.

endowments, his doctrine and method offer nothing which is not sufficiently accounted for by his constant meditation of the Old Testament writings, by free conversation with learned Israelites, and specially with members of the three principal schools or sects. At the same time, the originality, the freshness, the complete absence of pedantry indicate an independent culture, which would be greatly encouraged by his Galilean origin. The population of that province, especially in its more northern parts, contained a large pagan element. It is called by Matthew (iv., 15) and Isaiah (viii., 23), "Galilee of the nations"—that is, circle or district of the Gentiles. By Samaria it was separated from Judea, proud of its orthodoxy, which, looking down on the distant land, hardly allowed it to be truly Jewish. All these circumstances favoured a free religious development.

According to Luke, Jesus entered into connection with John when about thirty years of age. It was John's reputation which induced him to repair to the banks of the Jordan. Nothing more natural. He, too, was dissatisfied with religion as it existed. He, too, longed for something better; and, as his own teaching shows, he agreed with John in acknowledging moral renewal as the only way of safety. He submitted to the ceremony of immersion in the waters of the Jordan, which was a symbol of the confession of sin, and which John required from all who came to him (Matt. iii., 6; Mark i., 5). The Evangelist, in giving another signification to the baptism of Jesus, obeyed dogmatic scruples. The baptism, in its true signification, is easily understood, as soon as you abandon the historically inadmissible hypothesis of the absolute sinlessness of Jesus. Is not the best and the purest of men always ready to accuse himself of some fault—it may be of negligence, it may be of precipitation? And then, in the degree in which the moral sense rises, it becomes also more refined, and feels the lightest troubles of conscience and the least deviations from the ideal. Jesus himself, replying to a rich young man who called him good, expressly refused the epithet, which, he said, could be used of God alone (Mark x., 17; Luke xviii., 18).

John and Jesus had one common object, namely, the moral and religious renovation of the people, the institution of a popular community which might rely on advantages more solid than descent from Abraham, and which should be worthy to receive the expected Messiah. John sought success by denunciation, invective, and threats of the divine wrath. To such a course the spirit of Jesus was actively opposed. If he felt it sometimes necessary to employ minatory words, none the less did he prefer the ways of gentleness and clemency. He felt himself animated by a different spirit to that of Elijah, with whom John was compared by Jesus and his contemporaries (Luke ix., 54; comp. i., 17; Matt. xvii., 12). To this divergence a second must be added. In order to sanctify the people, and to raise it out of the moral

lowness into which it had fallen, John enjoined mortifications of the flesh, frequent fasts, abstinence from wine and the pleasures of life. In the eyes of Jesus this acetism was little better than the Levitical formalism; it was another way of materialising religion, of subordinating the moral ideal, and that to the extent of imperilling its existence; the expansion of the moral life did not appear to him less compromised by the dark and gloomy temper which such asceticism engenders. It may be believed that the views of John and Jesus differed as to their highest hopes, that is, as to the Messianic beatitude which would follow the moral renovation, and those divergences, traces of which escape from notice, doubtless bore the mark of their respective origin.

Matthew connects the commencement of the ministry of Jesus with John's imprisonment (iv., 12). Like John's, the substance of his teaching was: Change your mind; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (iv., 17; iii., 2; comp. Mark i., 15). At first, then, Jesus had no other aim than to take John's place. No more than John did he put forth a claim to be the Messiah. When he called Peter and Andrew, he spake only as with prophetic authority (Matt. iv., 18). A series of miracles are said to follow, without occasioning Messianic pretensions (Matt. viii., ix., xi.). Indiscreet demons reveal his secret, but are bidden to be silent (Matt. viii., 29; Mark i., 25, 34). At length people began to suspect that he was the Messiah (Matt. xii., 22; xiv., 33); but it is not a firm conviction, since at a later period he asked who men said he was, and who his disciples held him to be (Matt. xvi., 13). The first three Evangelists place the inquiry between the multiplication of the bread and the transfiguration; and the first two also fix on Cæsarea Philippi as the spot. In all three it is followed by the first prediction of the passion, and shortly after Jesus leaves Galilee for Jerusalem. There is in all these particulars, according to the acute remark of Baur, visible traces of an historical reminiscence. Accordingly, up to this time Jesus had passed among the superstitious populace as a prophet miraculously raised from the dead, but none the less as simply the precursor of the Messiah, and not the Messiah in his own person. All this, however, leaves undecided the question whether from the first or not till later on—and, if later on, when—Jesus was assured in his own mind of being the Messiah.

Not from his consciousness of being the Messiah, however, did Jesus draw his religion, but the reverse. The assurance of holding that high office grew naturally out of his religious elevation and enthusiasm. The call ensued from the fitness, and the call was followed by the claim and the discharge of the consequent duty.

The Religious Ideas of Jesus, according to the Synoptics. It is to the first three Gospels we must turn, if we would enter into and read the mind of Jesus touching the work he had to perform. The Sermon on the Mount has, and with good reason, ever been

regarded as the quintessence of his teachings. At the very beginning of it the fresh Christian thought distils like fertilising dew in spring. In what is called the eight beatitudes (Matt. v., 3-10), you behold the Christian paradoxes which throw into contrast the new religion with that of the Jews no less than that of the Gentiles. The blessed are not the rich, the full, the joyous; but the poor, the afflicted, the hungry, the thirsty. The way to man's real good and his true happiness is not power, nor conflict, nor rigorous exaction of your right, but the spirit of gentleness, endurance, and peace. The new world is compared with the old, the world turned upside down. Externalities are as nothing, what is internal is everything. A man's soul is supreme. Peace of heart sinks and effaces all outer misery, and flourishes in connection with it, rather than in union with pomp and pride. Jesus had seen the wants of the soul stifled among the rich by material enjoyments, while among the poor they were satisfied and composed by suffering. Well might he promise blessedness to the poor Galileans in recompense for an indigence auspicious to the sentiments he wished to awaken. Revolutions are always the same, and Christianity was a very great revolution; they find their first foothold not among the opulent and the successful, but among the needy and the heavy-laden. However, since physical need is not the sole reason why Jesus proclaims the famished blessed, Matthew in giving a spiritual import to the words did not disfigure his thought, but represented it more correctly than did the Ebionites at a later day, with their ascetic exaggerations and their condemnation of all external substance.

It is to a future world, it is to heaven, that Jesus refers the accomplishment of the promises that he makes to the poor and the oppressed. Internal good, inseparable from holy thoughts and moral progress, assumes the form of a future reward. And, in truth, that reward is not an illusion; the contradiction there is between the outer and the inner cannot last for ever, and the new spirit awakened in humanity will in the end fashion the external world after its own image. This is the natural and, though slow, certain work of history; it is the progress which is accomplished even in this state, and which the religious sentiment takes pleasure in contemplating, as completed in a world to come.

From the conversion of the external into the internal, which marks the exordium of the Sermon on the Mount, flow all the interpretations of the law which fill up its first portion. Beyond the act at which the virtue of the Pharisees stopped, Jesus proceeds directly to the intention, to the soul. Murder he forbids, in forbidding anger and hate; adultery, in forbidding lust; perjury, in forbidding oaths as profaning veracity. By contrast with what was said to the ancients—that is, to those who were under the Mosaic law—Jesus presents himself as the lawgiver of the soul, while Moses was the lawgiver of the deed; or

rather, he places himself above Moses, as accomplishing the legislation of the letter in the spirit. Over against the truly Hebrew, and in general ancient precepts of evil for evil, of love for your own people, and of hate toward your enemies (Matt. v., 38), Jesus sets the spirit of forgiveness and beneficence, offering as the actuating motive, "that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (45). If there is in the New Testament one authentic utterance of Jesus, this certainly is his, for in the interval which elapsed, before the final completion of our Evangelists in their present form, men's minds were too narrowed and too heated by fanaticism and conflict to be able to conceive a thought so lofty, bright, and comprehensive. Here, then, we put our finger on one of the grand features of the piety of Jesus; alike for his head and his heart, the Heavenly Father was that Infinite Goodness which makes no arbitrary difference in his love, and this idea of God shows us precisely why he took pleasure in calling him Father.

Not in the Old Testament could Jesus acquire this fundamental conception. The idea of God as the father of all men is not found there. It is Jesus' own idea; and if he makes it the basis of his religion, the reason is that indiscriminate goodness lay at the centre of his own nature, and was the sentiment in virtue of which he found himself in full harmony with God. Not to suffer yourself to be troubled by human wickedness more than God; not to overcome evil except by good; not to punish an enemy except by beneficent service—this principle flowed forth from the deep fount of his own heart. When he exhorts his hearers to show themselves true sons of the Heavenly Father by acting as he acted; when he invited them to be perfect as he was perfect (Matt. v., 48), his words say to us that he conceived God's moral perfection as being such as he himself felt in the loftiest moments of his religious life, while that sentiment grew purer, richer, higher by the contemplation of his ideal in God. His loftiest religious faculty, the ripe fruit of his soul, was that universal love which will conquer evil only by good; and this sentiment he ascribes to God as the fundamental quality of the divine essence.

If men are God's children, they are brothers, each in regard to each (Matt. v., 22), they are, too, all equals. We ought, then, to treat our neighbour as ourselves, and not to be severe toward him, while indulgent toward ourselves (Matt. vii., 3); to be to him what we should wish him to be to us (12). This has always, and justly so, been accounted the true moral principle of the Christian religion. It contains the germ of human civilisation, namely, the subordination of the individual to the general good of the race, which lives in us and claims acknowledgment and honour from each in others.

By the tenderness, by the activity, by the flame of this universal love, Jesus rose above all the restraints and all the limits of life; he felt himself one with his Heavenly Father, and overflowed with an inmost blessedness, in the presence of which external joys and sufferings lost all their signification. Thence that serene unconcern which is disquieted neither about food, nor clothing, but looks to God who clothes the lilies and feeds the sparrows (Matt. vi., 25); that content of heart during a wandering life, in which often the son of man had not where to lay his head (Matt. viii., 20); that disregard of earthly glory and shame, under the assurance of bearing to man the divine light and love (Matt. v., 11). Thence, too, that predilection for children whose guileless and unperverted heart as yet knows neither hate nor pride, and who are what is most lovable because they know only how to love (Matt. xviii., 3; xx., 14). Thence, too, that new law of offering the left cheek to him who strikes the right (Matt. v., 44); to travel two miles with a person who may require one, and to forgive a brother's transgressions, not merely seven times, but seventy times seven (Matt. xviii., 21).

In developing in himself to the utmost this serenity of soul, one with God and one with man, Jesus had realised the prophetic ideal of a new covenant, and of a law written in the heart (Jer. xxxi., 31). To employ the poet's words:—"He had made the will of God his own will. In return, God came down into his heart from the throne where He governs all worlds; the gulf was filled up, all threatening phantoms had vanished;" in him the man had passed out of vassalage into freedom. This tranquillity, this serenity, this career, the natural outflow of a joyous and lovely disposition, we may call the Hellenic element in Jesus. But a Greek could have raised himself to this moral and spiritual altitude, and to that pure conception of God which it involves, only with the aid of philosophy; in Jesus this transcendent spirituality was the result of his education under the Mosaic law, and the expansion and refinement he drew from the writings of the prophets.

It may be asked through what phases Jesus made his way to this composure and harmony of soul. The accounts that we possess of his life never speak of severe struggles and perilous combats, out of which peace emerged in the midst of difficulty. It is true that apart from concise notices of his childhood, those narratives cover only the short period of his public life, and place him on a pedestal where he is above all human weakness. We may, then, presume that this period of light and peace was preceded by a period of obscurity, conflict, perhaps errors. But, unless all analogies are deceptive, traces of such, had they existed, must have been left behind. All the characters purified by struggle and violent crises—Paul, Augustin, Luther—have borne indelible scars, and their figure retains something hard,

dark, severe. Nothing of the kind in Jesus. A trace of some conflict of the kind has been seen in the account of the temptation, but only in consequence of a false interpretation. The agony of the garden is but an effort to persevere in a state of mind fortified by long habit, and not an endeavour to reach loftiness. Jesus, from the first, appears as a beautiful nature which had only to follow its own law, to know itself and strengthen itself in its own consciousness, without ever having need of change or renewal. This did not naturally exclude hesitations or ephemeral faults any more than the necessity of a serious and sustained effort to conquer itself, and to attain to complete self-renunciation, as Jesus himself acknowledged when he disclaimed the title of good. In fine, the character of Jesus was formed without any violent crises, and by voluntary and rigorous self-discipline. Such is the true sense, the only intelligible sense of the doctrine of his impeccability. In this particular the great Apostle to the Gentiles was inferior to his Master, and the two great restorers of Christianity in the Roman and in the modern world, Augustin and Luther, are nearer Paul than Christ.

Jesus and the Mosaic Law. It is, then, by a purely spiritual development, and by the full expansion of his loving nature, that Jesus came to religious harmony in coming to peace and union with God. In consequence, he could look on the externalities of the national worship with no more favourable sentiment than temporary toleration. Tracing the religion of his forefathers back to its centre, he declared the love of God and the service of man to be its theology and its ethics (Matt. xxii., 35), in comparison with which whole burnt offerings and sacrifices were of small account. Yet expiations formed an integral and an essential part of the temple service. Jesus, on the contrary, well understanding the essential relations of God with man, granted remission of sins with the full authority of his religious sentiment, without any form or condition, the moment he discerned tokens of true repentance in love, trust, and faith (Matt. ix., 2 ; Luke xii., 47). He takes up the same position in regard to the Sabbath, to which his countrymen attached very great importance.

"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark ii., 27). There is, then, reason for holding that, fully assured of the inefficacy of external forms of worship, and of the incomparable value of inmost piety, he sought for means and occasions whereby he might open the eyes of his contemporaries. How far he actually went in this direction may be a matter of question, but clearly in principle he was a great spiritual reformer, who could satisfy his sense of duty only so far as he weaned his disciples from outwardness in religion, and led them to "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Jesus and the Gentiles. As soon as Jesus had the conviction that the Mosaic worship did not express the true essence of religion,

and formed the wish of effecting such a reform as would secure acceptance for his idea, he had but one position to assume in regard to non-Israelite peoples. One principal effect of the Mosaic ritual was to preserve the unity of God, by keeping its professors intact from the surrounding world of polytheists and idolators. When, then, this restriction was disowned, the wall of separation fell down, and the religion of the spirit became virtually the religion of the world at large. It may be questioned whether Jesus from the first saw the full bearing of his own idea. Here a growth was possible. Advisedly restricting his ministry to his countrymen in its earliest stage, he was probably led to expand his views and enlarge his efforts in the degree in which he found individual Gentiles more open to his appeals than men of Hebrew blood, as he taught in Galilee, and especially on the shores of its famous lake, where pagans from various lands were in numbers occupied with commercial pursuits.

Jesus and the Messianic Idea. We have conducted the analysis of the mind of Jesus so as to ascertain its relations with Judaism on one side, and heathenism on the other, without as yet having ascertained its position in regard to the conception of the Messiah entertained by his race and age. By this delay we have wished to mark that his assurance of being the Messiah arose in his soul only after the full development of the thoughts and affections we have just set forth. A firm belief in his own religious originality, faith in an ideal perfection, devotion the most profound and lively, the elimination from religion of all political, ritualistic, and personal interests, a clear and full perception that peace with God and self was attainable only by a pure spiritualism, must to a large extent have grown up and ripened in Jesus before he would be led to give attention to the Messianism of the Scripture and of his generation. And in these essential preliminaries we see the germs of the idea thereon which he would form and cherish. Original and independent, nor less spiritual, like himself, would that idea assuredly be. Accordingly, we find Jesus acting in presence of the world with ceaseless discrimination. "The Son of David" was one of the popular titles of the Messiah. It is often used of him by others, never by him is it applied to himself. Another, namely, "Son of God," he accepts, but with reserves. His own chosen name is "Son of Man." But this seems to have a wider bearing, and to denote his official connection with the human race. Nor is it until the latter end of his ministry that he accepts from his disciples, through the mouth of Peter, the denomination of "The Christ," and then under circumstances which show that the title had not been given to him either by the multitude or by his own circle (Matt. xvi., 13). Then, too, was it that he began the attempt to instruct his Apostles as to the true nature of the Messiahship, to the effect that it was not a post of power and glory in a worldly sense, but

one of ignominy, suffering, and death. How alien to this was the thought of even Peter, who had confessed him to be the Christ, is manifest by the rebuke the same heady disciple administered to his Master, and by the severe reproach uttered by the latter in the words: "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art a stumbling-block to me; for thou savourest the things not of God, but men;" adding the remarkable words, obviously addressed to all: "If any man desires to follow me, he must deny himself." In connection with this representation of himself, which has its foundation in the ancient prophets, Jesus is represented by the Evangelists to have asserted that he should rise from the dead and return in the power of God and the majesty of his kingdom. If his life is to be recited historically, it is only in a figurative manner he could have made these averments. Yet his return was certainly expected, since but for such a belief "no Christian whatever would have come into existence."

Theatre and Duration of the Public Ministry of Jesus. In order to establish the kingdom of God, Jesus travelled up and down the land of Judea, especially in its northern and north-western parts. He had a species of home at Capernaum, on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee, the birthplace of some of his most prominent disciples (Matt. iv., 13; viii., 5, 14; ix., 4, comp. 23; Luke iv., 23). He was accompanied in his journeys by some chosen pupils, and by certain women in easy circumstances, who make provision for his wants (Luke viii., 1, 3; xxiii., 49; Matt. xxvii., 55 seq.; Mark xv., 40 seq.). Now he preaches in synagogues on the Sabbath (Matt. xii., 9; xiii., 53; Mark i., 21; iii., 1; vi., 2; Luke iv., 16, 31, 33; vi., 6; xiii., 10); now he addresses large numbers in the open air, speaking to them from some elevation (Matt. v., 1); it may be on the borders of the lake, it may be on the deck of a vessel (Matt. xiii., 1 seq.; Mark ii., 13; iii., 7; iv., 1); now at Jerusalem, in the temple, he discourses with the doctors and exhorts the people (Matt. xxi., 22; xxiii., 39; Mark xi., 27; xii., 42; Luke xx., 21); and now, again, in houses opened to him by hospitality or friendship, he instructs and edifies the inmates. In general, he, like Socrates, seized every opportunity to cast abroad the seed of the word, so as not to neglect any soil where it might take root and fructify. How long he was occupied in the work of evangelisation it is difficult to determine with exactitude. The option lies between one year and three years. The time of its commencement is not exactly known, but it certainly ended in the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate. The principal portion of the interval he spent in Galilee, where he awakened much sympathy, and gathered a group of faithful followers. But desirous of acting on a wider, more open, and more important scale, in order to give a new form to the national religion, he visited Jerusalem, the capital, where he made his great and decisive effort. That the endeavour was likely to

fail, as fail it did, Jesus might well apprehend after the experience he had had of the obduracy of the priesthood, the ignorance and grossness of the masses, and the fickleness even of the crowds which attended his steps, capable, indeed, of a momentary enthusiasm, but offering no firm support in the hour of peril. Though Jesus could not be ignorant of the risk he ran, he was impelled forwards by the necessities of his mission; to stop was to forfeit acquired results, while to persevere would be crowned at the worst by effects which always reward the faith of the martyr.

Jesus' Method of Teaching. The teaching of Jesus, which was the chief characteristic of his ministry, produced the strongest impression, and, in sympathetic souls, the deepest and the most durable. This we learn, not only from the testimony of the Evangelists, but the historical results which his words produced. The reason of the impression is given by Justin Martyr (First Apol. i., 14), when he says:—"His utterances were brief and pithy; for he was no sophist; but his word had a divine power." A definition which expresses at once the religious feeling with which his instruction flowed, and the pure simplicity of its form. Jesus was not a rabbi; he spake not as the doctors of the law; his was that telling word which bears its proof in itself. Thence, in the Gospels, that rich harvest of maxims and precepts, inappreciable even independently of their religious worth, for the clearness of the view they imply, the directness of the blow they strike, the justness and applicability of the sense they convey. Take for example these:—"Render to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and to God what is God's; no one puts a new patch on an old garment, or keeps new wine in old skins; they that are well need not a physician, but they that are ill; if thy right hand cause thee to sin, cut it off and cast it from thee; take the beam out of thine own eye first, and then thou shalt see how to take the mote out of thy brother's eye; not seven times shalt thou forgive thy offending brother, but seventy times seven." These are imperishable words, for they utter, in pointed and intelligible forms, truths incessantly confirmed by the experiences of life.

Most frequently it is the opportunity of the moment that calls forth these words of wisdom from Jesus. That which regards the tribute-money was occasioned by a captious question on the part of the Pharisees; that on the forgiveness of injuries, by a question from Peter; that regarding the physician, by the scandal felt by the Pharisees at the relations Jesus had with social outcasts. On other occasions, his words are parts of sustained speeches, delivered when he had to address assemblies more or less large; such as the mote and the beam; the cutting off the hand; the plucking out of the eye. Among his discourses, the Sermon on the Mount has for its object to teach the multitude the fundamental principles of the New Law; that which Jesus addresses to the Twelve instructs them in the duties of their newly-appointed

office. In his great speeches respecting the Pharisees are grouped all his accusations against that famous sect. In Matthew specially you find those longer and fuller utterances which, however, are sometimes Mosaics, combining in one frame sentences pronounced on several different occasions. Those utterances, in general, present a natural, if not strictly consecutive, succession of ideas; the form of expression is constantly simple, clear, and pregnant; the examples from natural life, the figures from nature, are happily chosen, and often set forth with true poetic feeling.

There is much poetry in the parables. Jesus was fond of this form of instruction, for it struck the hearer, and by the explanations it occasioned called forth reflection and intelligence. The seven parables put together in the 13th chapter of Matthew were not delivered at once, but none the less do they in their general import, together with the Sermon on the Mount, form part of the most authentic of Jesus' words.

This first group of parables is a symbolic picture of the progress of the kingdom of God, set up in the secrecy of the human soul; telling how it is diversely received, stopped in its advance, altered by impure elements; but constantly going on until, at last reaching its end, it is proposed to men as the most noble reward of their endeavours after righteousness. In another cycle of parables the kingdom of heaven is considered in its final crisis, and in the relation of the destiny of men to the efforts they have made in the way of duty. There you find described the different layers of Jewish society—the Scribes and Pharisees sunk in the mire of religious self-sufficiency, the mass fallen very low, but conscious of their fall, and so capable of being lifted up, and, standing out in that mass, the Publicans doubly hated and despised as being at once serfs to Rome and to Mammon. At the same time the Master's word already passes beyond the Jewish horizon, and puts forth to the Gentiles an invitation into the kingdom of God. Jesus' thought, and the form of his thought, are recognisable in the parables of the Pharisee and the Publican (Matt. xviii., 9-14); that of the Good Samaritan (Luke x., 30-37); and that of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv.). In substance, at least, they really proceeded from him, for they completely correspond to his spirit. It may be observed that the maxims of Jesus are often replies to questions addressed to him. Now, we have the disciples asking, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii., 1); now, Peter asking how often a brother's offence ought to be forgiven (xviii., 21); now, disciples of the Baptist asking why those of Jesus are not obliged to fast as often as themselves and the Pharisees (ix., 14); now, Scribes and Pharisees putting questions as to his disciples' neglect of hand-washing before meat (xv., 4). Toward the end of his career, the first three Evangelists put together a complete series of questions, addressed to him by his enemies in order to ruin him with the people if he did not answer, or to

extort from him a reply which might be turned to his disadvantage. The answers of Jesus contain some of those concise and imperishable sentences which we have noted above as the kernel of his instructions. Jesus, in some instances, appears as an interpreter of Scripture. His grandeur in this lies in that he knew how to read the old letter with a new spirit. Hereby, he became a prophet, an honour he would have retained had he even been a worse interpreter. He was a spiritual teacher, not a scientific professor.

The Miracles. As soon as Jesus was held to be a prophet, he would be expected to work miracles. The expectation would find its fulfilment in popular opinion. Thenceforward, whenever he appeared in public, he was surrounded by the sick and the infirm, were it only to touch the hem of his robe, because they expected to be healed thereby. It would have been strange had not the excited imagination of the sufferers occasioned their cure, and led to their attributing the result to his power to work miracles. Many cures ascribed to Jesus were wrought on demoniacs—that is, persons diseased in mind. The power—which was, however, not absolute—lay in the moral ascendancy of Jesus, and in the imagination of the patients.

But here we come to the limit which the historical point of view assigns to the power of Jesus; not that it is possible to determine strictly what is historical in each miraculous narrative in the Evangelists. We merely intend to say that a point may be fixed beyond which all reality ceases, because all historical analogy fails, inasmuch as all natural explanation becomes chimerical.

The Apostles. In the mission which he assumed, Jesus proposed to himself not some immediate effect on the people, but a great and lasting moral reform. For this purpose he needed fellow-workers. Hence the twelve apostles, who were chosen by himself. In fixing the number he intended to show that he had Israel in view, but it does not ensue that his eye did not extend beyond that narrow circle. These disciples were, in the main, faithful and constant. Their intelligence was not superior.

The Final Journey to the Metropolis. At last, Jesus turned his steps southward, intending to go up to Jerusalem. In general, he had for his object to develop the moral and religious culture of his people gradually, in order to detach them more and more from ritualism, outer purifications, perhaps sacrifices; to remove them from dependence on the hierarchs; and to place them under the direction of men imbued with the spirit and power of true religion. His success in Galilee gave him the courage, and made him feel the necessity of confronting his adversaries in the centre of his power; prudence had him make the venture at a moment (the Passover) when he might expect support from the mass of visitors from Galilee, and when the presence of numerous

Jews from foreign lands gave a channel whereby his influence might be spread abroad. It cannot be reasonably admitted that he hoped to attain his end and to transform the religion of the nation within the seven paschal days, but, perhaps, he expected to gain a position whereby he could maintain himself in the capital so as to continue his work. Or he may have meant to return into Galilee after the festival, leaving the seed he should sow to germinate in Jerusalem, until he could resume his labours in the city on other festival occasions. These conjectures we make if only to show that one cannot deviate from the evangelical account without making Jesus into an unsuccessful revolutionist or a senseless visionary.

Jesus soon found himself beset with difficulty, and threatened with treachery and death. His means of escape were inconsiderable. The Jewish authorities were embittered, determined, and active. His nearest friends understood him but imperfectly. He had no grounds for reliance on the multitude. The last meal he took with his disciples is full of gloomy presages. The apprehensions were soon fulfilled. He is arrested by officers sent for the purpose by the Sanhedrim, aided by Judas. Accused of a conspiracy against the national religion, he avows himself the Messiah. The avowal is met by the charge of blasphemy. The blasphemy deserves death. Thus condemned by his countrymen, he is taken before the Roman governor, without whose concurrence the sentence could not be carried into effect. Here he is accused by the Jewish authorities of raising the people against the civil power. With difficulty do they bring Pilate to take steps for his execution. He is, however, crucified, dies, and is buried.

His alleged resurrection being miraculous is not historical. Besides, no one of our Evangelists is an eye-witness. The sole book in the New Testament that can be attributed to one of the twelve Apostles, the Apocalypse, does not take us beyond the idea that Jesus was put to death, and that he had been called to an immortal life (i., 5, 18; ii., 8). The resurrection, then, is not an external fact. The Evangelists do not report a reality, but express their own opinion, and that opinion involves the recognition of miracle. The reign of the Messiah is everlasting. In consequence, his death is only a break. The missing link is supplied, and the chain restored extends itself onwards indefinitely. The source of all is the over-heated imagination of the disciples. Such is the internal way—all sentiment, imagination, extreme nervous excitement—by which belief in the Messiahship of Jesus was restored, after having been smitten in the heart by his violent death. From that time the new and profound religious life, which had taken a personal form in him, and which he had communicated to his disciples by his teaching and example, was irrevocably put into possession of durability and development, while the miraculous hue impressed on a revival of the kind

remained fixed on his image, his disclosures, his acts, his destinies. His entire life sank into a cloud of glory, by which he was more and more raised above humanity, and so made more and more foreign to natural and historical truth.

General Summary of Christ's History. At the conclusion of his second "Life of Jesus," Strauss sums up his views respecting the historical Christ. The general tenor of what he says is less positive, perhaps, than might have been expected. If so, this is only a reason why the substance of it should be here presented.

One preliminary—Strauss never ceases to be followed by his anti-supernaturalism, and this dark and heavy shadow beclouds his vision, specially when he comes at last to look at Christ, as reflected from our actual Gospels, or from the Church. Under these, to him thick veils, the real Christ is darkened so as to be dimly seen. Accordingly, the figure of Socrates, he says, is more definite and more distinct than that of Jesus, and Xenophon and Plato, in historical qualities, surpass Matthew and John.

Such a judgment is not unseemly on the part of one who regards all the supernatural in the Evangelists as so much falsity, whatever its kind, whatever its origin. To those, however, who see in the supernatural a simple efflorescence and manifestation of the same divine light, holiness, and love that produced the natural in Christ, the beclouding and distorting medium has no existence, but is rather an additional display of God in history and God in Christ.

Nevertheless, Strauss refuses assent to such a deny authenticity to the words of Jesus in general. Some of them are as certain as anything historical can be. The circle, however, is not a very wide one. And as to his acts, the circle of certainty extends not much beyond his last journey to Jerusalem, and his sufferings and death. However, among those who have carried on man's ideal of moral perfection toward completion, Jesus doubtless stands in the first rank. He introduced into it features which it lacked before, or remained undeveloped, while the limits of others which stood in the way of its universal prevalence he restricted; moreover, he gave it grandeur and sanctity by impregnating it with religion, and by embodying it in his own person he communicated to it the most intense glow of actual life. Besides, the religious community which proceeded from him has secured for that ideal the widest extension over the family of man. The features of patience, gentleness, and philanthropy, which Jesus has made predominant, remain a part of the permanent heritage of our race, and are the very soil whence has grown all that we now call humanity. It is true that Jesus had forerunners and will have successors. We miss in his image the artist, the merchant, the statesman; but fully developed is everything that relates to the love of God and man, and to individual purity of heart and life.

The alleged deficiencies are more or less imaginary ; but if Jesus gave in thought and act "everything that relates to the love of God and man, and to individual purity of heart and life," he, in giving the vital principles of moral perfection in all its aspects, sowed the seed of every virtue that can invigorate, embellish, and complete human existence, whether in the individual, the family, the Church, the worship, the mart, the State, the world.

The magnitude of the change, indicated by the positive avowals thus made by Strauss, to be accurately measured must be accompanied by the blank, dreary, and unqualified profession of disbelief with which he concluded his first "Life of Jesus," in these words :—

"The results of the inquiry which we have now brought to a close have, it appears, annihilated the greatest and most valuable part of that which the Christian has been wont to believe concerning his Saviour Jesus, have uprooted all the animated motives which he has gathered from his faith, and withered all his consolations. The boundless store of truth and life, which for eighteen centuries has been the aliment of humanity, seems irretrievably dissipated ; the most sublime levelled with the dust ; God divested of his grace, man of his dignity ; and the tie between heaven and earth broken."

Whence this remarkable change ? It has come, we believe, from the philosopher sinking into the man, and the man rising above the philosopher. Should this moral transmutation proceed, the remaining antipathy to the supernatural may be expected to disappear.

STRICTURES ON STRAUSS'S HISTORICAL OUTLINE.

Doubtless the Christian disciple will miss in what precedes much, very much, of what the historical Christ contains, as seen, loved, and revered in his own mind. But such a point of comparison he must for the moment lay aside. It is a period of disintegration in which we live. By some it would be termed rather a period of dissolution. Certainly, many "old things are passing away." And this fact must be distinctly recognised, in such a manner as to become the position from which to survey the future. "What will the end of these things be ?" (Dan. xii., 8.) The answer is to be found in a Scriptural statement, and in a marked tendency of the day. The statement is that all things are becoming new (2 Cor. v., 17). This renewal is the act of divine providence, no less than that primal renewal which was announced in these terms, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. xxi., 5). Like the days of "Herod the King," these days form one of those great ordinal periods in history when mankind, having outgrown their traditionary system of thought, cast their skin and emerge into higher and more suitable forms. The actual change is not death, but moulting. The sempiternal vitality and vigour of the life of Christ has entered so deeply into the present social and individual organisms as to expand

and uplift them to such an extent as to burst the old bottles and demand new ones. To change the metaphor: we live not in the winter of blank and cold unbelief. That season is passed and gone. It is now spring; early spring it may be, but not too early to give tokens of coming summer; for already there are warm gushes of sunshine, the hedges begin to bud, the fields resume their verdure, the lark carols in the air. Indeed, all things seem full of hope. The reason is, that the Everliving One is busy now in a grand act of renewal. The spirit of Christ having proved too large and too powerful for semi-barbarous forms of religion is throwing them off, and that, too, by the outpouring of its own energies on all flesh. The consequent fermentation is undergone and felt even by unbelief. And thus Strauss's "New Life of Christ" contains a tacit refutation of the old one, and preparation for something better still. Here is the tendency to which I referred, and that tendency, illustrated by Scriptural facts, is illustrated also by similar crises in Christian history during the last eighteen centuries.

Leaving the survey of these to the reader's leisure, I now ask him to turn from the defects of the foregoing historical outline, and calmly to consider and duly to appreciate the extent of positive admission, and of Christian history, which it comprises. The preparatory circumstances which made the appearance of Christ possible, though presented from the negative side, are so set forth as to show that Christianity is not anything abnormal, but a link in the chain of those natural sequences by which divine Providence conducts the human race, in their higher education and in their consequent progress, on through successive ages and ever-improving orders of civilisation. It is true that this supernatural element is not presented by the critic. Nor, indeed, from his philosophical point of view could it be presented. But this is not a derogation from, but an enhancement of, the value of the sketch, since the latter proceeds from no friendly pen, can be coloured by no Christian predilection, and so may be regarded not only as historical fact, but also the least which the author could set down with any solid regard to truth.

Similar remarks might be made of the several phases in the life of Christ through which the author passes. In the earlier parts of this century popular infidelity in England, at least, denied the very existence of Jesus.* On the Continent, the whole of actual Christianity was proscribed as imposture, or exploded as astronomy transmuted into religion. These rough and rude denials are now themselves denied, and the extreme schools of unbelief are compelled by the stern logic of facts, and the equally

* See "The Historical Evidences of Christianity Unassailable, in Four Letters, addressed to the Rev. R. Taylor and Mr. Richard Carlile, by J. R. Beard." London, 1826.

unyielding logic of advancing culture, not so much to admit as to declare and illustrate a certain continuity of facts and reality as appearing on the stage of the world in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, which itself qualifies as "An Historical Outline of the Life of Jesus."

The particulars which enter into that sketch conduct the reader from the birth of our Lord to his death. In doing so, it acknowledges and employs the historical elements supplied by the first three Gospels. Here, again, it is easy to complain of omissions, but more useful would it be were the student to form in his mind a conception of the history of Christ as is here either expressly set forth or manifestly, though tacitly, implied. Beyond a doubt, Jesus is an historical character. Beyond a doubt, the leading facts in his public career are known. Equally is it certain that the principal features of his character are imprinted on the pages of the Gospel narratives. Those features, too, as drawn by Strauss, are of the finest kind. It is an honour to sit at the feet of so great and good a being as his hand portrays; nor less is it an inestimable benefit. If Socrates excelled all other men, he in turn is surpassed by Jesus, even as described by Strauss. Nor is it less true that the most effectual answer to the unworthy misrepresentations which Renan makes of "the holy one and the just," is the historical outline furnished by a critic who, working to the same end, is above employing the same means.

It is, however, in the words and deeds of Jesus, which Strauss spares and acknowledges, that the chief value of his "Outline" is contained. A man's words are his real life made audible and visible. The words of Jesus reveal the Lord to all generations. They make him an ever-abiding presence, nor less an ever-prevailing power. That power is, according to the philosophical reporter, of the purest, loftiest, and most enduring nature, for his words find embodiment in his deeds. The Christ even of Strauss is the benefactor of the world.

Let the ensuing supposition be pardoned for the sake of the point of its illustration. Suppose, then, that Strauss is right, and that his "Outline" contains all that is true of Jesus in the main; what remains? What do we still retain? What, in other words, is indubitable?

Nothing less than this is, at the worst, the heritage of the Christian, namely, to own the divinest of men as his instructor and guide, and to possess the purest and most beneficent form of religion. Nor are these advantages such as can pass away. Being moral realities, emerging in connection with a pure and sublime human life, they have their source in man's moral nature; in other words, in the essential elements of the highest human good, or rather in God himself, and must endure for ever, and so retain their value to the close of this order of things, come when it may to individuals or the species, and in and through all other

worlds, forming part of the boundless and endless moral cosmos of the universe.

But the positive averments of Strauss go beyond the preceding. Jesus healed the sick, and so gained the reputation not only of an able physician, but a worker of miracles. In consequence, he was not merely a teacher and example, but a saviour. If, in our critic's opinion, he did not "save the people from their sins," he saved them from their maladies; and, inasmuch as the worst maladies are of a moral kind, and Jesus was by admission very efficacious in his moral cures, so has he a clear title to the honourable name of Saviour, even on the Straussian hypothesis. Well may the change of life be termed salvation which is produced by such moral ascendancy as that ascribed to our Lord.

While accepting this additional testimony to Christ, we must be allowed to question the sufficiency of the cause assigned for cures which, it is allowed, extended alike to the body, the mind, the character. To me it appears that we have here a notable illustration of the baneful effect on Biblical interpretation of a predetermined theory. Miracle is not to be tolerated while facts have to be accounted for. Hence arises a necessity for accepting such an explanation as may be at hand, be it good or bad. Christ's moral ascendancy over the people's imagination did it all! It opened the eyes of the blind, it restored vigour to the palsied hand, it composed the demoniac convulsions, it even made the dead rise, that is, in the popular belief. Jesus is a prophet, and, consequently, he works miracles at will, that is, in the popular belief.

This is the view our author deliberately expounds. Now, he expressly declares that one reason for his stopping with epileptical cures in the line of realities which he reports is, that historical analogy goes no further. Well, then, if historical analogy is his rule, he is bound to show, at least, a few instances in which the appearance of a prophet occasioned the marvels ascribed to Jesus. He cannot show one. The instance which approaches that of Jesus most closely contradicts his theory. John the Baptist was a prophet, yet no miracles are ascribed to him.

But let us look at the particulars of the causative sequence put forwards by Strauss. Peter's wife lies on her bed dangerously ill. Jesus enters the chamber, gives her his hand, utters a cheering word, and the patient is well. Whence this power? As we are not permitted to say, "It is of God," we have no alternative but to accept some human resource. "It is Christ's moral ascendancy that has effected the recovery." Well, high character has doubtless an effect in tranquillising the sick, but the impression is slight in itself, and slow in its operation. You appeal to analogy; allege instances, then, in which a fever was suddenly banished by the word of an eminently good and kind physician. "The woman's imagination lent its aid." Imagination ever takes the hue of

the general condition of the human system. If that is fevered and darkened, the imagination operates banefully rather than restoratively.

Besides, whence do you get the moral ascendancy which you employ? It is not supplied by the history either explicitly or implicitly. From anything that appears on record, Peter's wife may never have seen or even heard of Jesus before; and if she had done both, it does not follow that she believed in Jesus because her husband had become inclined to listen to his words.

Moreover, this moral ascendancy requires a cause—Whence did it come? You say from the discipline through which Jesus passed. The answer would be good did it contain a recognition of the presence and aid of God. Moral excellence involves two factors:—the one divine, the other human; and both must be genuine and energetic. But a pantheistic philosophy de-vitalises both. Where there is no real God there can be no divine help, and no sound morality. It follows that Strauss is not at liberty to employ for his purpose this alleged moral ascendancy which, were he consistent, he would, like Renan, deny or at least attenuate. Yet, let it be observed, Jesus held himself to be actuated in all by the Spirit of God. In his view, his morality was divine in origin as well as in support and influence. Pure self-deception! Divine really it could not be, since the sole divine recognised by philosophy is a cloud of mist, or an unconscious soul of the universe. What moral ascendancy could grow up out of so unreal a notion as Christ's conception of God? Here, again, Strauss assumes a cause in which he does not himself believe.

However, not merely must the moral ascendancy exist on the part of Jesus, it must, also, be felt and acknowledged on the part of the people, if it is to answer his purpose. Yet he cannot prove the existence in the popular mind of such a recognition, at least at the early point of time that I have taken up. His explanation is a theory clutched out of the air.

Yet, the admission of its existence would compel us to deny its sufficiency. Doubtless John the Baptist did possess surpassing ascendancy over not the people only, but the learned, the opulent, the official. Did it give him power to heal one demoniac?

The same murderous hand that put him to death would have slain Jesus at the outset of his career, had the latter possessed no other safeguard than moral ascendancy. The priestcraft and kingcraft that so narrowly watched and so ruthlessly destroyed the Baptist, could not be indifferent to the aims and efforts of Jesus. What, then, shielded Jesus from their wiles? Let us not deal with these matters in the abstract. Let us look at them in the light of modern instances. Jesus was a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter. "Rude in speech" to "ears polite," he was attired meanly, and without "where to lay his head." Leaving

his employment, he emerges from a cottage in a despised village of a despised province, and begins to travel up and down his native land accompanied by a few persons of a condition similar to his own. As he proceeds, he everywhere scatters words which savour of blasphemy and sedition in the ears of the ecclesiastical and political authorities. At last apprehended, he is tried and found guilty of those crimes. He is crucified.

This is the end to which he is brought by the rulers of the land. The interval between the opening and the close of his public career is variously estimated. Take the shortest. Then, how, during twelve months, did Jesus contrive to evade his enemies? Moral ascendancy would have no effect with them. Where could it avail? With the multitude? The Jewish populace were little likely to be deeply and permanently impressed by a lofty example. Capable of enthusiasm they were; but their enthusiasm was only momentary. And such as it was, it sprang not from moral ascendancy, but from fanaticism, partly religious, partly political. This, its origin, occasioned its weakness. It broke down the moment it was undeceived by learning that Jesus was a teaching and suffering servant of God, rather than the long-predicted and now intensely longed-for conquering and triumphant prince. The worshipped idol proved a *fetich* in their judgment, and then they were as indignant and brutal as they before were mean and superstitious. Even among the more soundhearted of the population Jesus had no safe foothold or retreat, for when real peril came his personal associates forsook him and fled. It is in the nature of things that he should have been betrayed and put to death.

Would his fate have been different in modern days? Instead of a Jew, let him be a Huguenot in the days of Louis the Fourteenth. Instead of a Jew of the first century, let him be a Jew of the Middle Ages. Or let him be a Protestant under England's Mary, or a Catholic under England's Elizabeth; or a Unitarian under Calvin. Nay, let us in imagination place him in our own midst in this year of grace 1868. Suppose this young carpenter had the presumption to enter one of *our* synagogues and stand up to speak, as he did in the synagogue of Nazareth, would he be endured? Say, in St. Paul's? or in Westminster Abbey? or in the meanest parish church in the land? Nay, would any one of the Dissenting pulpits in all England tolerate such an intruder? A richly-attired and well-spoken "gentleman" they might hear, and, beyond a doubt, they would listen to a bishop in full canonicals;—but, Jesus of Nazareth? No; certainly, no! The deacons or the churchwardens would speedily remove him from the place; well, if they did not hand him over to the police, to be on the morrow charged before the magistrates with "brawling in church." Yet, were Jesus, in an attempt to get the ear of England, now to teach as he taught of old, he would not speak

less or more adversely to the current tone of actual thought, and the current tenor of actual life, than he spake in that "Jews' land" somewhere about the year A.D. 30.

"Moral ascendancy?" Jesus had none. That was the very power he hoped and strove to gain. But he failed, and, failing, perished.

Yet, for one year, he went up and down that agitated and troubled land—hated by some, feared by many, distrusted by all except a few—and they misunderstood him first, and then deserted him.

This is simply not a miracle, because it is an impossibility. But for some special protection his first word would have been his last. The moment it was heard in high places that a young artisan was abroad striving to set up a *kingdom* in opposition to the Herods and to Cæsar, he would have been seized and effectually silenced. The fate of John the Baptist avouches the declaration.

It follows that he was under some special protection. And what must its nature have been? Nothing human, nothing ordinary meets the necessities of the case, and so I am thrown on something divine, something extraordinary. In other words, miracle is here indispensable to make the natural and the ordinary intelligible. Had Jesus wrought no miracle, he would have perished almost as soon as he began to teach within the reach of Herod Antipas. Miracle it was that kindled that enthusiasm which, far more than any moral ascendancy, could and did shield him from harm by surrounding him with a wall of fire in the popular heart even from the first. And the miracle that did this must have been the genuine "power of God," not any mere personal influence emanating from Jesus acting on kindled imaginations. Such things, superficial at the first, soon betray their deceitfulness. The demoniac who fancied he was cured would too soon have the fancy dispelled by returning fits and convulsions. And, then, instead of becoming a herald of Christ, he would prove his accuser. Very well did the bereaved widow of Nain know that, notwithstanding the words of Jesus, her son was no longer at her side, and duty, if not indignation, would make her tongue busy in the exposure of a deceit which had dared to play with her most sacred feelings and dearest interests. No; the history, in its broad and deep features, presupposes miracle as a condition and a necessary preliminary of everything assigned by either Strauss or Renan as a cause in these great issues. Whence these kindled imaginations? Whence this popular enthusiasm? Whence this moral ascendancy? Whence this recognition of a prophet in Jesus? Above all, whence his being acknowledged as the Messiah?

Here a few specific words must be uttered. According to the foregoing "Historical Outline," Jesus did not claim to be the

Messiah at all, but only, when near the end of his public ministry, accepted the title from the lips of Peter, by whom it was then misunderstood. Clearly, then, a recognition which did not exist could have had no causative influence in the previous current of events; that is, during the greater part of our Lord's earthly career. Not by that influence, then, could that career have been sustained and prolonged, nor epilepsy healed, nor crowds brought together. The great and manifest facts and effects of the public life of Jesus were wrought anterior to the acknowledgment of him as a divine messenger by the nation and by the disciples. Indeed, the suspicion that he was the Messiah did but trouble and confound people's minds. Occasioned by miracles actually wrought, rather than generating miracles unknown, except in speculative class-rooms and other hotbeds of falsity, that suspicion or notion complicated everything, making Jesus himself a living enigma; for, while this miracle and that said, in the popular judgment, he was the Messiah, the Messiah himself, as he stood there teaching and suffering, said he was not the Messiah (according to the popular conception)—but "John the Baptist raised from the dead," or "Elias," or "Jeremias," or "one of the old prophets raised from the dead" (Matt. xiv., 2; xvi., 14; Mark viii., 28; Luke ix., 19).

I have argued that the word "kingdom" would call forth ruinous hostility against Jesus, I add that even the tone of his morality would do him disservice rather than service with the high and the low. Take, as an instance, what is called the Sermon on the Mount. Its key note is, "Bear and suffer rather than resist; and let the bearing and the suffering be not in the act merely, but in the sentiment and the thought." Enough this of itself to set all the great powers of the land against Jesus. Of bearing and suffering the great and the small had had only too much. The day of relief and retaliation was at hand. As well preach the gospel of peace to Fenians, as to preach endurance to Jewish zealots panting for emancipation from the hated yoke of Rome. It is hardly too much to say that every one of our Lord's beatitudes would be accounted by most of his auditors a curse. And then, while he thus quietly revolted the popular feeling, he directly and loudly assailed the high dignitaries of Israel, saying: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v., 20). Having thus defied the people and the authorities, Jesus makes an attack on religionists in general, saying: "Do not your alms before men;" "Sound not a trumpet before you in the streets and the synagogues, as the hypocrites do;" "Do not pray standing in the synagogues and the corners of the streets;" "When ye fast, disfigure not your faces;" &c. Unfitted to gain moral ascendancy, the severe tone of the whole discourse is specially unfitted to call forth enthusiasm, and could only beget repulsion in the minds of most.

What else could be felt by the vindictive and sensuous Jew when told that anger was murder, and lust adultery, and reconciliation with a brother anterior in claim to public sacrifice? What else the limitation of the licence of divorce to fornication? What else the complete prohibition of oath-taking? While such words as the following would sound little better than the extravagances of an alienated mind: "If smitten on the right cheek, turn the left to the smiter;" "If a man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;" "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain;" "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow turn not thou away."

I have deduced the reality of supernatural concurrence on the part of Jesus from the peculiar natural circumstances under which he accomplished his mission. I now proceed to apply a test, similar to one I have already laid down, but in this case furnished by Strauss himself, to the miracles ascribed in the Synoptics to our Lord. The test I find in the following words, which are a literal rendering of the author's German; the substance of them has previously been given:—

"While to the genuine Hebrew, and specially genuine ancient, principles of rigid retaliation—namely, of love toward friends and hatred toward enemies—the requirement of forbearance and love of foes is opposed by Jesus (Matt. v., 38), his instruction terminates in these words: 'That ye may be children of your Father, which is in heaven; for He maketh the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust' (45). If any word in the New Testament, this certainly is from Jesus himself, and was not put into his mouth at a later day; for the entire interval which elapsed between his death and the formation of our present Gospels was too heated and narrowed by zealotism and conflict, as to be credited with the production of an utterance so large-hearted and serene. Here, too, have we a fundamental feature of the piety of Jesus; he felt and conceived of God as the Father, whose love had no respect of persons, and in this view lay the reason why he was so fond of calling him Father."—Second "*Leben Jesu*," p. 206.

There neither is nor can be any better criterion of what is Christ's than this. It embodies the very spirit of Jesus. I specially recommend it to all earnest students of the Gospels, and I do so the rather because some of the conclusions of recent theological science may have led them to own diverse elements as existing in the Evangelical narratives; nay, the fourth Gospel is declared to be unauthentic, and—such is the general inference—to be, in consequence, unreliable. In truth, far too much has been made of this external criticism, with its adverse deductions and undermining influences. The original acceptance of the books forming the present canon of the New Testament depended on no such ground. The age was not one of criticism, but of the "faith which worketh by love." It had, and it cherished in its heart, a better, a more immediate, and a more reliable criterion. That criterion was the image of Christ. Christ lived in the mind and in the life of the Church, and so enabled it to decide by a

sure and reliable sense what was Christian and what not in the varied literature that was then current. A Christ-like document was accepted, while one that was the reverse underwent rejection. Were I to speak more after the style of the New Testament, I should say that the Holy Spirit, or God in Christ, supplied the test, and that the test so supplied was good and sufficient. Let not anyone misunderstand my words, as if I thought that God's spirit taught this or disallowed that dogma. The period of speculation, which is anti-Christ, had not yet obscured and troubled the truly Christian consciousness, the essence of which was "the same mind that was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. ii., 5), and, accordingly, the gift of discrimination readily tried the spirits whether they were of God (1 John iv., 1; 1 Cor. iii., 13), and, to change the metaphor, sifted the wheat from the chaff. The test then applied, never wholly disused, was revived and employed (as I shall immediately show) by Luther, whose motto in regard to Christian and non-Christian books and words was in effect, "That is Christian where Christ is." Indeed, in this particular, the simple sons and daughters of the Church have ever been wiser than its doctors; for while the latter, after petrifying the Gospel and quenching the Spirit, set up learned and scholarly *criteria* as the sole means of settling the canon (though at best it can do so but indirectly and in behalf of the few), the true members of the Church at large have been practically eclectics, taking out and appropriating all Christ-like words and influences with the sure aid of their own spiritual affinities, nor less quietly but effectually leaving on one side the less pure and less divine elements. Let the practise continue; let it be encouraged, unmodified, except in becoming conscious of its prerogative, which is, indeed, supreme, and in taking a systematic form so as to do that intelligently which from the first it has done usefully. In possession of this internal test, the poor, to whom now as of old the Gospel is preached of God (though, alas! but rarely of man), may become rich in the best treasures of the true life and the one only salvation. Made independent of the schools, the Church, not, however, without due discrimination, will accept the contents of the New Testament as the reflex of the mind of Christ, and as a living testimony, borne of God himself, to the spirit and purpose of the religion of Jesus. No longer, then, will it be vividly concerned as to whether the fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle or not, for not only in its general tenor, but in almost numberless words it will find, acknowledge, revere, and love the same Christ that is inartistically portrayed in the three previous Evangelists.

The same valuable and reliable criterion I would apply to the miraculous deeds which the Gospels contain. Whatever is Christ-like is God-like, and whatever is God-like I ought to accept. This is the criterion. It is founded on the description which Strauss himself has given in the passage just quoted. Here, he

says, is Christ. This is the broad arrow of the kingdom of God. I accept the token, and I accept, also, all on which it is stamped. Show me a so-called miracle that is without the stamp, and I pronounce it earthly, not heavenly. Show me another bearing the sign in clear characters, perhaps in bold relief, I pronounce it heavenly and not earthly.

Moreover, Strauss furnishes me with a special justification. There was an interval between the oral tradition and the written record of the elements composing our Gospels. The length of the interval is variously determined by theological authorities. How short or long soever, it was, says our authority, one of heat, narrowness, and conflict. Similar must its products have been. If the period was unequal to the production of the lovely and comprehensive thought which Strauss so justly admires, then alike unequal was it to produce or colour the miraculous deeds ascribed in the Gospels to Jesus. For the most part these are like, not an age of passion and warfare, but the gentle, the loving, the sublime personage whom the Evangelists here paint in action, as in other parts they paint him in speech. In truth, the test thus acquired is fatal to both the mythical theory of Strauss and the legendary theory of Renan. Fictions, whether conscious or unconscious, ever take shape and colour from the minds in which they are produced, and if either the ordinary or the extraordinary deeds of Christ, as reported in our Gospels, had undergone the plastic influence of a later age to the extent alleged, then, beyond a doubt, would they have borne the impress of that age, and so differed essentially from what they are; and then the miraculous narratives would have resembled similar narratives in the Apocryphal Gospels, instead of presenting to them the broadest moral, spiritual, and historical contrast.

In thus terminating these strictures, I must request the reader not to assume that all the points in the "Historical Outline" on which I have not touched command my assent. I cannot, however, conclude without requesting a reperusal of the "Outline," as it would be, if supplemented by the matter which the writer's antisupernaturalism compels him to omit. Then the miracles would resume their proper places severally, and the whole narrative would resemble less imperfectly the Gospel as reported by the Synoptics; only that, in addition to the miracles, the wonderful words of Christ themselves should be incorporated in the text.*

Throughout the whole of what immediately proceeds, what attentive reader has not heard and heard again the witness which God bears of himself in the literature of the New Testament and in the Life of Christ? The instance now presented commends itself to our acceptance not merely by its intrinsic importance, but

* Assistance for this purpose may be found in the "Manual of Religious Instruction," translated by the author from the French of Dr. Réville. London: Simpkin and Marshall.

also by the position which it holds in the critical theology of the day. A thoroughly free and unprepossessed mind would have drawn a portrait less inferior to the sublime and tender Master. Doubtless, too, the books of the New Testament present a fuller and truer likeness, yet, especially in these times of doubt and discussion, Strauss's portrait of Christ has a high value and a special recommendation.

In that portrait, with all its deficiencies, I find indications of the presence and influence of God, for I there behold, and behold with reverent admiration, an image of *Jehovah*, who is the *holy* and *loving Father* of the sons of men.

3. THE CRITERION APPLIED TO THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

The evidence which has been adduced from the pen of the ablest and most honest assailant of historical Christianity that has ever appeared, must have great weight with every impartial mind, and may be expected to remove doubt from professors of Christianity. A yet more decisive testimony is offered in the writings of the Apostle Paul.

Converted to Christ, probably between the years A.D. 36 and 38, Paul occupied the interval from 40 to 64, when he suffered death under Nero, that is a period of about a quarter of a century, in preaching Christ in the principal cities of the Roman empire. If Jesus died in the year 35, and Paul opened his mission in 37, the work of the one and that of the other was separated by an interval of only two years.* The disciple yet remaining a Jew, may have seen and heard the Master. The probability of this has been inferred from 2 Cor. v., 16, and may be sustained by the fact that Paul had, from his youth till Stephen's death and his own journey to Damascus, passed his time in Jerusalem, and being earnestly engaged in religious interests, especially as first a student and then an eager advocate of Pharasaism, he would not have failed to hear and dispute much concerning the Galilean prophet, and could scarcely have failed, in all likelihood, to come more or less into personal contact with him. Certainly, he was contemporary with Jesus at the very time when the latter taught, suffered, and died. The personal acquaintance, if it existed, left Paul a Hebrew zealot indeed, yet may have embedded in his mind such impressions as proved good seed in good ground, when, at length, the needful condition of sunshine and rain came to make them bud, blossom, and bear fruit. Anyway, when on the road hastening to Damascus, furious against the new and rising sect, he was converted to Christ under circumstances of an extraordinary character. He saw Jesus in his glorified state, and

* The dates here given are those of Keim in his before-mentioned "History of Jesus of Nazareth," i., 35.

received from the divine Saviour's lips a commission to the world. Certainly, a conviction to this effect took possession of Paul's mind, and became the root of his future life. Those who deny the supernatural, deny also the solidity of his basis. Paul himself knew nothing of our modern philosophical distinctions. Wiser than we, he recognised but one seeing and one sight, and could not, therefore, commit the modern error of preferring the report of the bodily sense to the report of the mental sense, on which the bodily of necessity depends. With him, as with true philosophy, the two reports were so far one that the credibility of the former is conditioned on the credibility of the latter more than *vice versâ*. Accordingly, the appearance (as he believed) of Jesus to his outer eye revived internal impressions, so that he recollected and recognised his presence, and from that time forth became his most devoted servant. And when one calls to mind what a critical moment in his career this must have seemed to Paul, it is difficult to believe that only on what were, to him, the most solid grounds could, or did, he pass from the Synagogue into the Church.

His final decision was not immediate or hasty. The delay is a guarantee of the soundness of his determination. In Damascus, to which he went, he found Christian witnesses, in communion with whom the impression he had received must have been effaced or confirmed. The result tells us that it was fully established. At the end of the third year of his new birth, we find him in Jerusalem conversing with the Apostle Peter about Christ and Christianity.

What, then, do his writings contain bearing on the deeds and words of his Master? As a professed follower of Christ, he exhorts others to own Christ as their Lord (1 Cor. xi., 1). He is acquainted with the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and with many eye-witnesses of the fact; he knows also the object for which, under divine Providence, Christ died; and he is so sure of these several particulars as to assert them openly at a time when they could have been denied and set at nought by many, and as to make them the ground of an argument with some who, in the Corinthian Church, withstood and disbelieved the said resurrection. He employs the authority of Christ, if he does not also quote his words or their substance, in the ordinary matters of marriage and divorce (1 Cor. vii., 10; xii., 25); of bereavement and consolation (1 Thess. iv., 15); of sustenance for such as preached the Gospel (1 Cor. ix., 14; Rom. x., 14; Matt. x., 12 seq.); involving, at least, a general conception of the kingdom of God in Christ, and of fellow-labourers working for its establishment and extension. One fine utterance of the Lord's, not now found in the Gospels, he quotes *verbatim*, viz.: How that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx., 35), so as to make it likely that in either instances, in which the ordinary forms

of citation are not strictly observed, he intends to make quotations. Nor must the actual citation be passed before I direct attention to the fact that it contains the germ out of which the essence of the Gospel, comprising the character of its author, may be readily elaborated.

To such an extent, moreover, is Paul familiar with the aims, purposes, tendencies, and results of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ as to present to all ages a complete and ramified system of doctrine touching the will of God and the duty of man in relation thereto, the whole of which he himself sets forth as resting on a sure and well-known historical basis. To exhibit the fact in its particulars would require me to transcribe the bulk of his Epistles.

On one point I may add a few words. The resurrection of Christ, say the reality of the ever-living Jesus, so entered into Paul's nature, and so mixed itself up with all its higher elements, as to give substance, form, and colouring, not only to his thought, but also to his style and phraseology, and in doing so to present to all ages an irresistible assurance, first, of the Apostle's belief, and then of the certainty of the source of that belief. My meaning will be better apprehended if I give a few instances, and in taking these I shall not go beyond the Epistle to the Romans, universally received as Paul's.

Jesus is declared to be the son of God, with power *by his resurrection from the dead*.—Rom. i., 4.

God who *quickeneth the dead*.—iv., 17.

God who *raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead*; who was delivered for our offences, and was *raised again* for our justification.—iv., 24, 25.

We are reconciled and saved by *his* (Christ's) *life*.—v., 10.

We shall *reign in life* by one, Jesus Christ.—v., 17.

Grace *reigns unto eternal life* by Jesus Christ our Lord.—v., 21.

As Christ was *raised up from the dead* by the glory of the Father, so we should walk *in newness of life*; for if we have been *planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in his resurrection*.—vi., 4, 5.

Christ *being raised from the dead* dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him; for he *that liveth, liveth unto God*: therefore, reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but *alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*.—vi., 9 seq.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—vi., 23.

Ye are *dead* to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him *who is raised from the dead*, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.—vii., 4.

If Christ be in you, *the body is dead* because of sin; but *the Spirit is life* because of righteousness; but if the Spirit of him *that raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, *he that raised up*

Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.—viii., 10 seq.

Christ *risen again*, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall *separate us* from the love of Christ?—viii., 34.

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart *that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*—x., 9.

We, being many, are *one body in Christ*, and every one members one of another.—xii., 5.

Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.—xiv., 8 seq.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.—xvi., 24.

For the sake of simplicity and concision, I make on these quotations the following categorical statements:—

1. The writer (be he who he may) believed that Jesus lived after his death on the cross; that he lived in the spiritual world, and was associated with God in the spiritual renewal of mankind.

2. This thought pervades the letter, and that in such a way as to be its key note. The note, struck at the first, is preserved to the last, recurring at certain intervals, and whenever it recurs, introducing some variation of doctrine or view which depends for its character and tone on the general key note, and specially on the particular modification of the key note from which in each case it proceeds.

3. This thought of the once dead but now ever-living Jesus is in part expressly carried out, in part implicitly uttered throughout the whole, but whether there by implication or by direct averment, it constitutes the substance of the teaching, as well as gives its form and hue, determining the writer's choice of metaphors, so as to show that the whole is a natural and inevitable outflow from the deep fountains of the Apostle's inmost intellectual, moral, and spiritual life.

4. These unquestionable facts prove that in this thought we see the very kernel and core of Paul's inner nature.

5. Such an unveiling leaves it beyond a doubt that a living Christ was the central faith of the Apostle.

6. Such a faith must have had a reality for its origin, for no fiction, no fancy, no illusion, no dream, no adopted opinion, no "hallucination" could have had roots sound, strong, vigorous, piercing enough to strike so deeply and so firmly in a nature so logical, so robust, so manly, and, at first, so adverse to Jesus and his cause, as was that of the pupil of Gamaliel, the Hebrew of the Hebrews; Saul the persecutor, who became Paul the Apostle, and the martyr of Jesus Christ.

The fact thus presented and established in one of Paul's Epistles may be found in each of the rest in similar, and, occasionally, in even deeper and sharper features. Moreover, it may be found similarly in the Acts, and in all and each of the Scriptures that succeed the letter to the Romans. Consequently, when viewed as it stands in the Gospels, the resurrection of Christ may without exaggeration be pronounced the one underlying and pervading fact of the New Testament. Hence, doubtless, the marked emphasis of those words of Paul's, already cited :—"*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"

I question if there is any one fact in all history that has on its behalf a hundredth part of the historical testimony that is borne to the resurrection of Jesus by the New Testament. For amount and for validity, this witness is literally incomparable. Thus does God bear witness to his son in the Christian Scriptures.

Before I leave the topic, I request the student to go through the remainder of Paul's writings, or rather, of the whole of the New Testament, and to transcribe whatever passages or words he meets with bearing on this important point. Having done so, let him study these extracts carefully, with a view to learn what in their substance, form, and colour they testify in regard to the resurrection of Jesus. In order to view the whole as a whole, he should then write down and sum up the several items of testimony. Another process would complete alike the lesson and its impression. There is one defect in the plan just recommended. In separating portions, say of an epistle, from their context, you destroy the organic connection of the whole. This brings no small disadvantage. In order to remove the disadvantage and yet retain the impression already gained, read again the letter as it stands in the canon, and mark carefully the joints and bands by which the resurrection of Christ is, as a fact and a principle, connected with the thought, the diction, the affection, the moral and religious life, as well as the aim of the writer.

This discipline, useful in many respects, will have two results :

1st. You will learn that the resurrection, stripped of all its accessories, has two factors—death, life ; Christ dies, and lives again ; or, as Jesus himself puts the fact (Rev. i., 18), "I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Learning this momentous fact, cleave to it in its scriptural simplicity. You will thus escape from a load of difficulty and objection.

2nd. You will become sure that this fact lay at the centre of Paul's heart, and of every other primitive witness for Christ, and is thus so embedded in historical Christianity as to be inseparable from it. The existence of the one being conditioned on that of the other, the loss of either is the loss of both. Denying the

resurrection of Christ, you deny historical Christianity ; and denying historical Christianity, you deny the resurrection. The historical Christianity I mean is not the history shorn and pared down to meet the wants of a speculative theory, but the history as in substance found in the New Testament ; where, not from the scantiness of information, but from its fulness, and even superfluity, weapons of assault against the Gospel are fabricated, to the annoyance of the weak and the discomfiture of the wavering, while those who are built up and established in the faith know, and are fully assured, that historically, as well as spiritually, Christianity can only gain by the strictest and most unfriendly scrutiny.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOD BEARS WITNESS OF HIMSELF IN THE LITERATURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND IN ITS PRINCIPAL PERSONAGE, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

PART II.—THE CRITERION APPLIED TO THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

STRAUSS has appeared in these pages, and given evidence declaratory of a reliable historical basis as underlying the Gospel. I proceed to cite Renan in confirmation of his fellow-worker, Strauss. The testimony about to be adduced will be the more valuable because the methods severally employed by the two critics so vary as to bring them into conflict. Both led by a negative philosophy to deny and supersede the supernatural, the former uses for his purpose the leverage of myth, the latter that of legend. A myth is an unconscious investment of a thought or a fact in an envelope of unreality. Thus, the Messiah was expected to perform miracles. Jesus was acknowledged to be the Messiah. Consequently, he, in the popular conception, wrought miracles. The ascription had its origin in the historical recollections and national aims of the Jewish people. Error is here, but not deceit. The absence of the last element makes Strauss an incomparably less "unjust judge" of Jesus than Renan. The latter, disallowing the mythical theory as exaggerated in itself and insufficient for its purpose, refers all that is supernatural and very much that is transcendent in the New Testament to legend. A legend is a partly conscious and partly unconscious figment of the imagination, uncontrolled by intelligence and unrestrained by a pure moral sentiment. Accordingly, legend and deception go hand in hand. Yet legend involves an historical substratum, which is larger or smaller according to circumstances; and, in respect of Christianity, it supplies, directly and indirectly, a very considerable element. Hence, all the supernatural. As to the historical, if certainty is looked for, it is insignificant. Historical particles are indeed scattered through the Gospels, but so are they interwoven with legend that the two cannot be surely separated the one from the other.

We have seen what the mythical theory leaves behind, what remains from the destructive hand of legend? Whatever the two set aside, they can plead no higher sanction than such as belongs to theory. Both are simple attempts to explain and remove what their authors dislike. Failing in their purpose, they lose all authority, and sink to mere suppositions. Fail, however, they do;

for myth fails in Renan's judgment, and legend fails in the judgment of Strauss.

OUR GOSPELS ARE PROCLAMATIONS RATHER THAN HISTORIES.

The two concur in treating the Gospels as nominally histories; histories which grew up, indeed, eighteen hundred years ago, and were received shortly after their appearance, but which must now, when the world is so much altered, be tried and tested by scrutinies unknown of old, and of the severest kind. Not deprecating the severity, we ask whether the assumption that here criticism has to do with history rests on a solid foundation. Are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John simple historians? and are the compositions to which their names are respectively affixed simple histories? What is a history? It is a narrative, say, of a person's life—including his birth, education, deeds, thoughts, aims, decay, and death. Narration, then, is the characteristic of history. Moreover, the historian is a dignified personage, deeply and variously accomplished in learning, science, skill. This is history: is this that which we are authorised to assume in the case of the Galilean fishermen, led by a carpenter's son, himself a carpenter? The very names of Matthew, Mark, Peter, John, suffice to dissipate the fancy. Not histories, properly so called, but something better are the four Gospels. Let them report and characterise themselves. "The Gospel according to Matthew" (compare Mark i., 1). This, however, is a superscription standing not in, but at the head of the first four. It may, indeed, represent an early conviction, and involve an undeniable fact. But it does not contain a claim made by the Apostle Matthew. So far as the contents of the Scripture itself are concerned, it is anonymous. Even the superscription does not say that the Gospel was written by Matthew, but that it is "according to Matthew." The phrase would be justified if the substance or general tenor depended on the Apostle. And such is the fact. The present composition might not improperly be termed: "The Sayings of Jesus, collected by Matthew, and variously supplemented." Anyway, the work is anonymous. How very like a fraud this looks! No! rather, what a clear and striking evidence does this self-forgetfulness afford of childlike simplicity and godly sincerity. The collector of the finest utterances in the moral order ever spoken omits to prefix or affix his name to his work, though two or three words would have sent him down to posterity in the honourable position of a disciple and companion of the utterer. Men capable of such self-denial—men to whom such disinterestedness costs nothing—are not self-seekers of any kind, nor are they simpletons; and the circle out of which such compositions proceed is a circle of moral reality, not of myth or legend.

Moreover, the composition bears an altogether peculiar name. It is called Gospel. Beyond doubt, at a very early day, this title

attached itself to the four books which speak to the world about Jesus (Mark i., 1; Matt. iv., 23). What, then, does Gospel mean? In English, the word denotes *God's message*; in Greek, *Good news*. Both titles take us out of the strictly historical sphere. "Good news from God to man" is not a history, but a proclamation. Accordingly, those who bore the good news to the world are in the original called heralds, or proclaimers. Of that good news the substance is the approach of the kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth. Hence, two constituent elements—the kingdom and its proclaimer. The kingdom is "righteousness, peace, and joy;" the proclaimer coming from Galilee traverses the land of Judea and dies on Golgotha. His travels are missionary travels. Accordingly, an account of what he said and did in them is the Gospel, the good news which God has sent to man. Clearly, then, the substance of the proclamation is the principal thing, and as clearly the history sinks into a means. In consequence, you may expect to find in this Gospel the words of Jesus as the substance of the whole. Here is the good news. The rest is ancillary.

Such, exactly, is what criticism does find in the first Gospel, the core of which consists of the words of Jesus, treasured up and put together by Matthew the Apostle. What better guarantee could be had?

The history, then, is subordinate to the proclamation. It is the shell of the nut; the kernel is the ever-living word. As the clothing of the divine reality, it necessarily varied. It varied in time, place, circumstance. It varied with the herald; it varied also with his reporters. With the former it varied, for he would utter the same thought variously on various occasions. With the latter it would vary, for they varied in nationality, character, culture, object. Accordingly, the proclamation appears in the first Gospel coloured by a strong Hebrew dye. The second offers a series of rapid outlines not free from a Roman tinge. Luke is an historian in pretension, and a classic in his style. The fourth writer is a Hebrew in heart and manner, pervaded with refined and tender spirituality, ever tending to a universalism of the highest and noblest kind.

Thus, all four legitimately take their place in the new category of *the glad tidings historically set forth and illustrated*.

The change enables us to see and acknowledge the actual harmony, instead of searching for an imaginary one. The real harmony is in the substance of the proclamation—"the Gospel of the kingdom." As the proclamation is made by different persons, at different times, under different circumstances, and with somewhat different views, it, of course, appears in the four differently shaped and coloured, as we have already said. But these differences affect the accessories and the illustrations in the main. Consequently, while you look for oneness at the centre,

you also expect diversity in the surroundings; and those surroundings, mostly historical particulars, would naturally vary, more or less, as the sources varied whence they were drawn. It follows that unity in diversity is here the mark of truth and credibility. And this is exactly what we find in the four Gospels. The two features would naturally and inevitably ensue from the one Jesus and the one proclamation differently apprehended. The difference of the apprehension would lead to a difference of report without invalidating credibility, for even eye-witnesses see and hear variously—one this, the other that; few seize the whole. Yet the various parts may be re-composable so as to restore their original organic unity, and to enable the student to contemplate the entire figure which he possesses only in fragments. Here, again, the reality confirms our position. Out of all the diversity one Christ arises from the Evangelical records. Such a result would be impossible were those records products of folly or fraud—"illusion," "delusion," "hallucination," to use Renan's favourite words of explanation. Hence, we are led to the conclusion that our actual materials are autoptic—that is, that the words and deeds of Jesus were written down on the spot by some who heard and saw them. The inference is corroborated by facts, for beyond a doubt a large portion of the Evangelical record bears marks of being authentic in the strictest sense of the term. The words and deeds of the divine envoy stamped themselves on the hearts and minds of his beholders, and were there and then (or shortly after) committed to the custody of writing. The fact removes a difficulty. History, it has been said, is as an after-thought—a necessarily late production in the Church. Only when men's minds had been relieved from the expectation of the speedy return of Jesus would they begin to think about instructing the future by writing his history, the simple fact being that the Light of the world, the Sun of the spiritual sphere, had, ere he set on Calvary, unconsciously photographed an exact likeness of himself on the retentive tablets of his companions' souls, which speedily passed into copies (in the best sense of the term, *cartes de visite*) that bore the likeness into ten thousand hearts, to be year after year and age after age transmitted and multiplied indefinitely.

The view now given of the character of the Gospels may be confirmed by other facts. What is the title which Mark has himself introduced into his composition? He calls it simply "the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (i., 1). This is not the way in which historians designate their works. The writer of the fourth Gospel expressly declares that he wrote to produce the belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the source of the everlasting life (John xx., 29). The united testimony is to the effect that the earliest Gospel and the latest, covering two-thirds of the first century, were historial arguments or proclamations.

Somewhere during that long period the historical want became felt, producing our Matthew and our Luke (Matt. i, 1; Luke i, 1-4). Yet only the latter had the strictly historical sense, for the former employs a series of arguments to establish a claim for Jesus to be "Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (i., 1). But while the first Gospel contains a collection of the utterances of Jesus, made by Matthew himself, the kernel of the second is an outline of the deeds of Jesus, received by Mark from the lips of Peter. In these two documents, then, we possess the substance of the original proclamation as made by Christ, and this we have on the authority of two Apostles.

The view which traces our Synoptical Gospels back to Matthew's *Logia* (words), and Peter's summary of Christ's words and deeds, rests on good critical authority. It is enough to give in the way of proof the deliberate decision of Renan, who has stated the conviction more than once, and with marked emphasis, in his last octavo edition of his "Vie de Jésus." "How, then," the reader may ask, "does he avoid the conclusion you have set forth?" By the aid of a philosophical theory. His philosophy of history tells him that as human nature is divided between the lumpish mass ever open to delusion and the thinking few not themselves free from serious moral defects, so legend is an inevitable element in the beginnings of all religious movements. Thus universal, legend arose in the earliest days of Christianity, and even wove itself around Jesus, who yielded, if he did not lend himself, to the depraving influence. Thus it was, for thus it must have been. Those, however, who can free themselves from these *à priori* fetters, and believing human nature to remain mainly the same in all ages, read the past in the light of the present, and beholding amid much that is bad no little of what is good, and here and there something that is very good, and something that shows in man divine possibilities, will prefer to bow the knee to the surpassing moral purity and the transcendent spiritual elevation of Jesus, and see in those grand and sanctifying realities, as acting on his early disciples, a sufficient guarantee of thorough simplicity, sincerity, and love of truth which would keep illusion, delusion, and all the forms of deceit out of the circle of the Primitive Church. This the Christian, by the fact that he is such, is bound to believe, so far as Jesus himself is concerned. To the Apostle Matthew evil is not to be imputed on the authority of a supposition. That Peter did not yield to the illegitimate attractions of legend is proved by the high and pure moral tone of what is called his First Epistle. Hence we are justified in saying that the Church remained free from legend until it had passed beyond the first half of the first century. Would the sons of that first generation tolerate the basely born influence? If Peter had a son, would he be likely to give way to that which, had it shown its deformed features, would have been indignantly repelled by his martyred

father? Yet, the second generation takes us far on toward the end of the first century. Arrived there, we meet with the Apostle John. What fairly-judging person will, except on positive proof, assert that John would have tolerated; much less encouraged, legend? Looking beyond the course of the New Testament, I find very early writings. They are ascribed to "The Apostolical Fathers." I open one of them—"The First Epistle of Clement," the probable date of which is A.D. 97. Do I find any traces of legend here? The tone is as pure as that of Peter's letter. The same may be said of "The Pastor," which was so valued in the earliest ages as to claim a place by the side of the Canonical Scriptures, as seen if only in the circumstance that Tischendorf found it in Greek, at the end of the Sinaitic manuscript. With these and other writings of the same age and character the historical period ends, and the legendary period begins. It is marked by "The Apocrypha of the New Testament." It is impossible for the merest tyro in these matters to mistake the difference. The two are separated by a broad and well-defined margin. "Here is legend." You say, "there is fact." And this is what Renan would have said, but for the overpowering control of his antipathy to the supernatural.—See p. 83 seq.

The point of transition between the two does not fail to be noticed in the Scripture. "Cunningly devised fables" (2 Peter i., 16); "fables and endless genealogies" (1 Tim. i., 4); "profane and old wives' fables" (1 Tim. iv., 7); "Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth" (Tit. i., 14) began to appear early, but they were known, characterised, and denounced by the authorities of the Church, who, as having in hand a just and righteous cause, the cause of God, Christ, and men, did their utmost to acknowledge and recommend "the truth which is after Godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Tit. i., 1). The general tenor of the effort finds expression in Paul's instructions to Timothy:—"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; but shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness; let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim., ii.); while the same authority indicates the thoughtful and satisfactory manner in which the line of religious teaching was originally preserved and transmitted. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii., 2; comp. 1 Tim. i., 13; iii., 10, 14; 1 Tim. i., 18; vi.). The proper cure for such as have the legendary disease is the perusal of the epistolary writings of the New Testament, especially Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, and these do not in any degree lose their efficacy if brought down by criticism further on in the first century than the martyrdom of

Paul. The Gospels, moreover, gain in internal acceptableness the more their primitive condition is made known. I summon Renan as a witness :—

RENAN'S ADMISSIONS TOUCHING THE FOUR GOSPELS.—“We have on this point an important testimony, dating from the middle of the second century. It comes from Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, a grave personage, and laden with traditions, who all his life was careful to collect what could be known of the person of Jesus. After declaring that in such a matter he gives preference to oral tradition over books, Papias mentions two writings on the acts and the words of Christ: 1st, a writing by Mark, the interpreter (‘dragoman’) of the Apostle Peter, short and incomplete, not laid out in chronological order, comprising things said and things done, composed from the recollections and information of the Apostle Peter; 2nd, a collection of sayings or maxims written in Hebrew by Matthew, which each translated as he could. It is certain that these two descriptions well correspond with the general physiognomy of the two books now called, ‘Gospel according to Matthew,’ ‘Gospel according to Mark;’ the first characterised by its long speeches, the second specially anecdotic, much more exact than the first in small matters, concise even to aridity, poor in speeches, ill composed. Nevertheless, we have not absolutely these two documents. Our first two Gospels are arrangements in which the defects of this text are supplemented by that. Everyone desired to possess a complete copy. He whose copy had only the words, would desire to have the deeds also; and *vice versa*. Thus, our ‘Gospel according to Matthew’ seems to have absorbed nearly all Mark’s anecdotes, and our ‘Gospel according to Mark’ contains features which come from the speeches of Matthew. Each, moreover, drew largely from oral tradition then growing up around him. * * * The original *Logia* (speeches, oracles, sayings) of Matthew are without doubt represented by the discourses of Jesus, which fill a considerable part of the first Gospel. Indeed, those discourses, when detached from the rest, form a pretty complete whole. As to the original narratives of Mark, it seems that the text is found now in the first, but more often in the second. In other terms; the system of the life of Jesus in the Synoptics rests on two original documents; 1st, the words of Jesus collected by the Apostle Matthew; 2nd, the collection of anecdotes and personal particulars which Mark wrote according to Peter’s recollections. It may be said that we still have these two documents, mixed with details from other quarters, in the first two Gospels which, not without reason, bear the title of ‘Gospel according to Matthew,’ and ‘Gospel according to Mark.’

“What is indubitable in any case is that very early the words of Jesus were written down in the Aramæan dialect, and that very early also his remarkable actions were put into writing.

“Who does not see the value of documents thus composed of the tender recollections, the simple narratives of the first two Christian generations, still full of the strong impression which their illustrious founder had produced, and which seems to have long survived him? Let us add that the first three Gospels seem to have proceeded from that branch of the Christian family which was nearest to Jesus. The last edition of the text which bears the name of Matthew appears to have been made in one of the countries situated in the north-east of Palestine, where many Christians took refuge at the time of the Roman war, where kinsmen of Jesus were still found in the second century, and where the primitive Galilean direction of thought was preserved longer than elsewhere.

“Even had not Papias informed us that Matthew wrote the words of Jesus in their original language, the natural tone, the ineffable truthfulness, the unparalleled charm of the utterances contained in the Synoptical Gospels, the thoroughly Hebrew turn of those utterances, the analogies they present with the utterances of the Jewish doctors of the same age, their perfect harmony with the scenery of Galilee would speak decisively enough.”—“*Vie de Jésus*,” Introd. xlviii.-lvii. 13th ed.

"The Synoptical Gospels without doubt represent the primitive *Logia*."—Note, p. 79. 13th ed.

"The simple and gentle Christian families of Batanea, among whom the collection of the *Logia* took place—small societies, very pure, very honest, consisting of *Ebionites*: God's poor ones—having remained faithful to the teachings of Jesus, forming a little world in which there was not much movement of ideas—could well preserve the echo of the Master's voice. Thus, Matthew's Gospel is the one which assuredly best reproduces the words of Jesus."—"Appendix," p. 502.

"The fourth Gospel was not written by the Apostle John. It proceeded about the end of the first century, or at the beginning of the second, from one of the schools of Asia Minor, which were connected with John. It presents a version of the Master's life worthy to be taken into consideration, and often to be preferred. This is made probable both by external testimonies and by an examination of the document itself.

"Every unprejudiced historian will in many cases be brought to prefer the account of the fourth Gospel to that of the Synoptics. The last months of the life of Jesus in particular are explained only by that Gospel: many traits of the Passion, unrecognizable in the Synoptics, recover possibility and likelihood in the narrative of the fourth Gospel.

"The historical canvas of the fourth Gospel is, in my opinion, the life of Jesus such as it was known in the immediate circle of John. I add that his school knew better external circumstances of the life of the Master better than the group whose recollections formed the Synoptical Gospels."—Pref. xi; Appendix §§ 5 seq.

Renan was blamed by negative critics with inclining too much toward the fourth Gospel in the early editions of his "Life of Jesus." In consequence, he promised to review the entire subject. The result he gives in an "Appendix" to his thirteenth edition; the testimony which it bears I subjoin:—

"The author of the fourth Gospel had sources of information besides ours, and these have to us the value of an original. The verses, i., 35-51, have more of an historical character than the correspondent passages of the Synoptics. The writer knew what concerned the calling of the Apostles better than they. Admitting several journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem, and long sojournings of Jesus there, he is far more in the way of truth. In the matter of chronological arrangement, he is wholly entitled to preference. He records traditions common to him and the Synoptics—the part played by the Baptist, the baptismal dove, the etymology of the name Cephas, the names of at least three Apostles, the traffickers driven out of the Temple—but which he did not derive from them, witness the *divines*. These he derived from recollections or traditions. The author then, has given us an original version of the Life of Jesus, and this version ought to be put on the same footing as the other biographies of Jesus. The word uttered by Jesus on his trial, 'Destroy this temple and I will rebuild it in three days,' he derived not from the Synoptics, but from an original tradition. The verses, i., 22; iv., 2, carry us into full history; this episode is very like reality. The writer's topographical knowledge in iii., 22, 23, shows he was an Israelite; iv., 3-6, bespeaks the hand of a Palestinian Jew. Verse 22 is very important, being deeply marked with Jewish prejudices. I cannot understand it if it was written about 130-150, in a fraction of Christianity the most detached from Judaism. Verse 35 is exactly in the style of the Synoptics, and of the true words of Jesus. What a splendid utterance may you find in 21-23, (omitting 22). If Jesus never pronounced this divine word, none the less it is his; but for him the word would never have existed. In the Synoptics there are passages as comprehensive in spirit as those which prevail in John (Matt. viii., 11; xxi., 43; xxii., 1 seq.; xxiv., 14; xxviii., 19; Mark xiii., 10; xvi., 15; Luke iv., 26; xxiv., 47). In

these passages I see the true thought of Jesus. The others are spots, failure proceeding from disciples poorly capable of understanding their Master, and so misrepresenting his thought. Verse 44 (xii., 43) has a high character of authenticity. Then, in 46-54, you have a miracle of healing very similar to those which fill the Synoptics. This proves that our author does not imagine miracles at his pleasure, but follows a tradition in recounting them. Indeed, of the seven miracles, he reports there are only two (the nuptials at Cana and the raising of Lazarus) of which you find no trace in the Synoptics. The remaining five are there with differences of detail. Chapter v. shows the writer to be well acquainted with Jerusalem (2 seq.). Bethesda, indeed, is not mentioned anywhere else; but the author could not have mentioned the name and the circumstances connected therewith had he not known Hebrew, which the adversaries of our Evangelist do not admit. Consequently, a part of the Christian community ascribed to Jesus miracles which were held to have been wrought at Jerusalem in the presence of hostile spectators. Chapter vi., 1-14, reports a miracle ascribed to Jesus during his lifetime—a miracle to which a real circumstance gave birth. Verse 23 fixes the locality, and seems to prove that these miraculous narratives have an historical basis. The exact features furnished by the verses 60 seq., 68, 70, 71, have an original character. The passage, vii., 1-10, is a little historical treasure. The ill-humour of Jesus' brethren, the precautions he himself is obliged to take, are expressed there with admirable simplicity. It is an original recollection, whatever the pen by which it was written. How can anyone, after this, say that the personages of our Gospel are types, representatives of certain forms of character, not historical beings having flesh and blood? It is rather the Synoptics that have an idyllic and legendary tone; compared with them, the fourth Gospel has the attractions of history and of a narrative, which aims at exactitude. Chapter viii., 1-11: this passage exists not in the best manuscripts. Nevertheless, I think it formed part of the primitive text. The topographical particulars in verses 1 and 2 are just. Nothing in the piece differs from the style of the fourth Evangelist. Beyond a doubt it belongs to the Evangelical tradition. Luke (vii., 37) knew it, though in another connection. The word, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,' is so perfectly after the manner of Jesus, it so well corresponds with other Synoptical features, that one is altogether authorised to consider it authentic in the same degree as the Synoptical words. In chapters ix., x., 21, you find exact topography. The explanation of Siloam is good. The miracle cannot have come from the symbolical imagination of the author, for it is found in Mark (viii., 22 seq.), with a coincidence bearing on a curious and minute particular (John ix., 6; Mark viii., 23). At x., 22, we again enter on topographical details, rigorously exact, and which you cannot explain if you assert that our Gospel contains no Palestinian tradition. The journey beyond Jordan appears to be historical. It is known to the Synoptics. In the whole part of the life of Jesus, which we are now about to enter, the fourth Gospel contains particular statements infinitely superior to those of the Synoptics. The passage, xi., 46-54, is very natural; it ends with a circumstance which certainly was not invented—the flight of Jesus to Ephraim or Ephron. Verses 55, 56, present a very satisfactory chronological connection. The account of the triumphant entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem is in accord with the Synoptics. Verses, xii., 20 seq. have an indubitable historical stamp. The aphorism in verse 25 appears in the Synoptics. It is evidently authentic. Our author does not take it from the Synoptics. It follows that the author of the fourth Gospel sometimes follows tradition. In the narrative which announces the betrayal of Jesus, the great superiority of our text is again made manifest. The topography of xviii., 1, is exact. The arrest of Jesus is better narrated. Jesus names and surrenders himself. Our author has, on the Passion, documents far more original than the other Evangelists. He also makes Jesus to be taken before Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas. Josephus confirms the justness of this statement, and Luke seems here, again, to gather up a sort of echo of our Gospel (Luke iii., 2; Acts iv., 6). Annas had long before been deprived of

the pontificate; but, during the remainder of his long life, he in reality continued to hold the power, which he exercised under the name of his sons and grandsons, who were successively raised to the supreme priesthood. This circumstance, of which Matthew and Mark, not being familiar with Jerusalem affairs, have no notion, is a ray of light. How could a sectary of the second century, writing in Egypt or Asia Minor, have known this? The too often repeated opinion that our author was unacquainted with Jerusalem and Jewish matters, seems to me totally destitute of foundation. We find the same superiority in the account of Peter's denials. The particulars in verse 16 are astonishingly true. We come to Pilate. The circumstance in verse 28 has all the appearance of truth. Our author is in contradiction with the Synoptics as to the day on which Jesus died. According to him, it was the day when they ate the lamb, the 14th of Nisan; according to the Synoptics, it was the following day. Our author may be in the right. Certain circumstances reported by the Synoptics, *e.g.*, Simon of Cyrene returning from his labours in the fields, suppose that the crucifixion took place before the Passover. Nor can one conceive that the Jews would demand, or the Romans carry into effect, an execution on so solemn a day. The question in xix., 19, has its echo in Luke. The topography and the Hebrew of verse 13 are of good metal. The whole of this scene is historically just. What is said of the privileges of the 'disciple whom Jesus loved,' does not prove that an immediate disciple of Jesus wrote the Gospel, but it does prove that he who holds the pen believes, or wishes to make others believe, that he sets forth narratives of an immediate disciple of Jesus, and that his object was to exalt himself by showing that he was what James was not, nor Peter, namely, a true brother, a spiritual brother of Jesus. Inferior in some respects to the Synoptics, our text regains its superiority in what concerns the leverage taken on the cross. This circumstance, which Matthew and Mark express with obscurity, and which Luke has quite transformed (xxiii., 36), finds here its true explanation. Jesus, burning with thirst, asks for drink. A soldier presents a little of his acidulated water by means of a sponge. This is very natural, and archaeologically correct. It is a trait of a soldier's humanity. The episode touching the breaking of the legs, and of the blow of the lance, peculiar to our Gospel, has nothing but what is possible in it. The Jewish and the Roman archaeology of verse 31 are exact. The author of the materials which form the base of our Gospel may have known friends of Jesus, of whom the Synoptics were ignorant. Our Gospel, considerably differing from the Synoptics down to the last week of Jesus' life, is in general accord with them in all the narrative of the Passion. Yet he does not borrow from them. He had a tradition (or circle of historical records) of his own—a tradition parallel with that of the Synoptics, and that to such an extent that you can decide between the two only from intrinsic reasons. An artificial composition, a sort of *a priori* Gospel, written in the second century, would not have had this character. The position of the John-writer is that of an author who knows that his theme has been handled before, who approves of much that has been said, but who thinks he possesses superior particulars, and gives them without troubling himself about others. As to the resurrection, our author is more in the truth. According to him, Mary of Magdala also goes first to the tomb; alone, she is the first messenger of the resurrection, facts which are in agreement with the last chapter in Mark (xvi., 9 seq.). At the news brought by Mary of Magdala, Peter and John go to the tomb. Here we have a new and very remarkable agreement in the expression and small details with Luke (xxiv., 1, 2, 12, 24) and with the termination of Mark preserved in the manuscript L, and in the margin of the Philoxennian version. The first two Evangelists do not speak of a visit by the Apostles to the tomb. A decisive authority gives the advantage to the tradition of Luke and the Johannine writer. According to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, written about the year 57, and certainly much before the Gospels of Luke and John, the first appearance of the risen Jesus was to Cephas, and Peter and John were inseparable companions. It is probable that at this decisive moment they were together, that they received the information together, and that they ran toge-

ther. The simple personal features which the narrative of our author here presents are almost signatures of his hand. The decided opponents of the authenticity of the fourth Gospel assume a difficult task, when they oblige themselves to see the artifices of a forger in these features. The desire of the author to put himself with or before Peter in these important circumstances (i., 35 seq.; xiii., 23 seq.; xviii., 15 seq.) is altogether remarkable. Explain this as you may by feeling, the origin of these passages can hardly be posterior to John's death. The narrative of the earliest goings and comings on the first day of the week, not a little confused in the Synoptics, is in our author completely exact and consistent. Yes; here we have the original tradition. The broken numbers of this tradition were arranged by the Synoptics in different ways, all as to probability inferior to the view of the fourth Evangelist. Observe, that at the decisive moment, on the Sunday morning, the disciple, who is thought to be the author, ascribes no particular vision to himself. A forger, writing without regard to tradition, in order to glorify the head of a school, would, in this running fire of appearances, which all tradition refers to these first days—would not have failed to attribute one to the favoured disciple, as was done for James. The appearance of Jesus, which follows in our author, I mean that which took place before the Apostles united together, on Sunday evening, coincides with Paul's enumeration. But it is with Luke that the points of agreement here become striking and decisive. Not only the appearance takes place at the same date, before the same persons, but the words uttered by Jesus are the same; the circumstance of Jesus showing his feet and his hands is slightly transposed, but it is recognised on both sides,* while it is not found in the first two Synoptics at all. But how, you will say, can you hold for the narrative of an eye-witness an account which contains manifest impossibilities? He who, not admitting miracle, admits the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, is compelled to regard the formal assurance in xx., 30, 31, as an imposture. Not so; Paul also declares that he had seen Jesus, and yet we do not reject either the authenticity of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, or the veracity of St. Paul. The twenty-first chapter is an addition, either by the author himself, or by disciples of the author. This chapter contains a narrative of another appearance of the risen Jesus. Here, again, you find important coincidences with the third Evangelist (comp. John xxi., 12, 13, with Luke xxiv., 41-43). Then there come certain obscure details (John xxi., 15 seq.), in which, however, you feel the impress of John's school more than anywhere else. The words, "And we know that his testimony is true" (24), are an addition made by disciples. Similar attestations appear in two writings, which are from the same hand as our Gospel (1 John i., 1-4; 3 John 12). Thus, in Jesus' life beyond the tomb, the fourth Gospel retains its superiority. The question touching the author of the fourth Gospel is certainly more singular than any found in literary history. I know no critical question in which opposite appearances so balance each other, and keep the mind completely in surprise. Either the author is a disciple of Jesus, an intimate disciple and of the most ancient date, or the author, with a view to gain authority, employed an artifice, carried out from the beginning to the end of the book, and tending to create the belief that he had been a witness placed in the best possible position for knowing and reporting the truth. Who is the disciple whose authority the writer wishes to make his own? The title tells us: It is John. There is not the least reason for supposing that this title was added contrary to the intention of the real author. It certainly stood written at the head of the Gospel at the end of the second century. But the Evangelical history presents, in addition to the Baptist, only one person of the name of John. We must, then, either say

* In John, it is "his hands and his side" (John xx., 20); in Luke (Luke xxiv., 36), "his hands and his feet." The preference is here, too, due to John, for it has been questioned whether our Lord's feet were pierced with nails.—"Winer's Bibl. Realwörterbuch." Article "Kreuzigung."

that John, the son of Zebedee, wrote the fourth Gospel, or consider that Gospel as an apocryphal writing, composed by an individual who wished to make it acknowledged as the work of John, the son of Zebedee, for does not the biographer as good as say :—'I was his intimate friend ; I enjoyed his special preference ; all that I tell you is true. for I saw it ?'

"We have three Epistles which also bear the name of John. If there is anything probable in critical results, it is that the first of these Epistles is from the same pen as that which wrote the fourth Gospel. The author of this Epistle, like the author of the Gospel, represents himself as an eye-witness (1 John i., 1 seq. ; iv., 14) of the Evangelical history. At the first view of the subject, the most natural hypothesis seems to be that all these Scriptures are truly the work of John, the son of Zebedee.

"For me I see only one issue. It is to hold that the fourth Gospel is certainly in a sense 'according to John,' though not written by John himself. Did notes or dictations left by the Apostle serve as the basis of the text we have in our hands ?"—"Appendix."

The foregoing extracts from Renan's writings have a double reference. They refer to the Synoptics ; they refer, also, to the fourth Gospel. Taken generally, and in union with the admissions already set forth from Strauss, they avouch a large portion of the Evangelical history, and this they do in a most emphatic manner, inasmuch as the two critical authorities are among the most hostile and the most able opponents an historical Christianity ever had to endure. Let, then, the mind of the Church be at ease. What Strauss and Renan have not destroyed, but rather recognised, may be accounted indestructible.

The admissions, with all their value and importance, may not satisfy the requirements of the theory of plenary inspiration, but they certainly confirm the statements which I have made on my own knowledge, and supply a solid historical basis for Christian doctrine and Christian faith. Did my space permit, I could easily illustrate the fact that, moreover, they show how God bears witness of himself in the literature of the New Testament. I will, however, suggest that such a state of things, requiring, as it does, careful, minute, and conscientious inquiry and comparison, and tending to exercise judgment and discrimination, is far more conducive to general and religious culture than any stereotyped literalism whatever. The Scripture is thus seen to be in harmony with God's general Providence, which, by its variations, and even its difficulties, educates our higher faculties, and greatly contributes to the development of our nature. Here, moreover, we find that Matthew, Peter, Paul, and probably John, together with Mark and Luke, stand sponsors for the reliability of the substance of what is called the historical literature of the New Testament. How, under these circumstances, Renan can declare so little of what it contains certain, it is for him to explain, and if he has nothing more satisfactory than his aversion to the supernatural, and his legendary hypothesis, he will find but few followers among Englishmen, who are not so readily captivated by theory, nor so much overpowered by metaphysics. Their general good sense, and high moral sentiment, will guard them

against the seductions of speculation, and keep them in unison with the general voice of the Christian Church in favour of the truth and trustworthiness of the tenor of the later Scripture.

Who wrote the fourth Gospel? Nor will they be prompt to discard the fourth Gospel, especially when they find that even Renan shows himself half inclined to accept the Apostle John as its author. Certainly, it supposes either partial ignorance or much dogmatism to decide against that conclusion, especially as not a few of the first critics of Europe have already pronounced in the affirmative, while others vibrate between yes and no. For my own part, I do not hesitate to say that if John was not its author, John, or some one similarly situated, is responsible for the bulk of its contents; and if this alternative is justified, then the difficulty of finding a second John, or another Apostle fit to be compared with him, not a little increases the probability of his being concerned in its production.

Ewald, Tischendorf, and Bretschneider vouch for the Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel. The hesitation to reject the Gospel as resting on John's authority, must surely be augmented when it is considered that scholars of such distinction as Ewald and Tischendorf have decided in its favour. I add another testimony to the same effect, of no small importance. The controversy respecting the Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel was opened on the continent by Bretschneider, who modestly put forward certain objections thereto, in his "Probabilia" (Leipzig, 1820). The publication called forth valuable works in reply. The result was that Bretschneider expressly renounced his opposition,* and continued, in several works, extending to nearly the end of his days, to signify his adherence to the general opinion of the Church on the question. Connecting the fourth Gospel with the first Epistle bearing John's name, he more than once expressly ascribes them both to the Apostle John, fixing the time of their origin in the last quarter of the first century, when they were produced in Ephesus.

Before I proceed further in this matter, I desire to correct a false impression, of no small consequence. Criticism, it is thought, has disproved the Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel. This is a gross mistake. The mistake arises from a misconception of the point which the critics have to handle. That point is not so much whether John wrote the Gospel to which his name is prefixed, as

Whether the verdict of the Ancient Church in the affirmative can now be sustained. If the traditional affirmation is found satisfactory, of course it is confirmed. But what if it is not found satisfactory? The sole statement the failure warrants is, that the criticism of to-day does not sanction the judgment of antiquity. Yet, what is

* See Tzschirner's Prediger-Magazin, ii., 2, p. 154 seq.

the ordinary statement? It is, that John did not write the fourth Gospel. A wide logical leap, indeed! You cannot prove that John wrote the first Gospel, therefore it could not be proved eighteen hundred years ago! Are your external opportunities, then, better than the men of the end of the first and the beginning of the second centuries? They are inferior, greatly inferior. And since the Gospel was received very early as John's, the presumption is that John was its author, and that presumption stands good against everything but clear and positive evidence to the contrary. Such evidence you do not possess. Such evidence you cannot possess. How uncertain your negative to the voice of the early Church is, appears from the fact that it has been recalled almost as soon as stated. Indeed, the negative has more than once passed into an affirmative. Witness Bretschneider, already noticed. Witness, also, Strauss. In the first edition of his "Leben Jesu," the latter pronounced against the common opinion; in the second, he went over to the other side; and in the third, he retraced his steps. What do these facts declare but that our present means of revising the verdict of the Church are inconsiderable and insufficient? Under these circumstances, an absolute statement that John did not write the fourth Gospel is simply unwarranted. Nay, there arises hence a consideration in favour of the verdict, and so of his being its author. A verdict which Strauss could not clearly set aside; moreover, a verdict toward which Renan labours is to be respected rather than disallowed. Another consideration works in the same direction. Causes of an extrinsic nature have operated in producing these vacillations. Now, a modified rationalism has doubted, and been satisfied; now, an extreme rationalism has uttered a decided negative, and adhered to its verdict; now, a prevalent gross materialism has set in movement a strong and overbearing current against the ordinary view, and now an earnest and judicious spiritualism has rescued the Scripture from its peril. As it has been, so will it be until theology is set free from philosophic impulses, and the friends of religion, asserting their own proper prerogatives, take their stand on the same high moral ground on which originally the judgment of the Church was founded; for a greater mistake cannot be committed than to assume that the Christians of the first or second century were decided in their judgments respecting the authorship of the contents of the New Testament, by properly critical considerations. Tradition prevailed with them far more than open-eyed inquiry; and over and above tradition, as the one *norma* or authoritative rule, was the tenor of the contents of each Scripture that came before them for acceptance. If the contents in general harmonised with Christ, as formed in their hearts, and manifested in their lives, they pronounced the book Christian or Christ-like, and took it into their collection or canon; if not, not. For a long while the criterion was safe and reliable, for those who employed it remained

free from the "rudiments of the world;" and only when unchristian elements debased the pure gold were works of inferior merit allowed. The condition of the earliest Christians may be ours, and, indeed, will be ours in the degree in which we live pure Christian lives, and, so living, have a pure Christian test—each one in his own inner man. And in the degree in which this higher authority exists in individuals, and so in the Church, will our received literature be allowed or disallowed on irreversible grounds. Judged by that criterion, the Gospel of John will continue to hold its seat in the great heart of Christendom, and I question very much whether any genuine Christian would be content to spare the Gospel, however adverse, the judgment of philosophers or critics. And this doubt I express with the less hesitation, if only because the mere critical position being, to a large extent, external, must ever remain one of singular disadvantage, inasmuch as it is totally unable to gather around it all the elements necessary for thorough knowledge and satisfactory judgment. Only by reproducing the past, can the past be judged. But how far from reproducing the past, in respect of the present issue, is the profoundest and most impartial scholar. In making these statements, I by no means wish to discourage investigation. Let criticism do its utmost. Every step, even the smallest, set in the direction of a true and full knowledge of Christian antiquity is of high value, and deserves cordial commendation. But let not criticism assume judicial functions beyond what its qualifications warrant, and let it remain conscious of its deficiencies, so as to avoid everything like the *ex cathedra* tone of metaphysical and dogmatical ecclesiasticism. The age of infallibility is past and gone. It would be sad to witness its skeleton magnetised and reproduced within halls that ought to be filled with the fresh and living atmosphere of genuine scholarship, which is no less modest in tone than wise in method and exact in results.

What immediately precedes, suggests the remark that if Christianity depends on these scholastic points, it is in a precarious position. The schools never have agreed, and never will agree. So long as learning and intellect are the recognised arbiters of Christian truth, certainty and satisfaction are impossible, even in the schools themselves, and beyond their walls—that is, over the great area of Christendom—the reverberations of those ceaseless debates and varying decisions will, so far as they are received as of paramount authority, spread ever wider and wider doubt, distrust, uncertainty, disbelief, and dissolution. Thank God, there is "a more excellent way."

The Christ of the fourth Gospel is the true Christ. That way I have just indicated. And to what I then said I wish to add an emphatic word. To me the internal evidence of the fourth Gospel is decisive. There, I find Christ—there, and in full, there alone. All (speaking in general terms) the other authorities of the New

Testament contribute to the portraiture of Christ. In a sense, they each give a likeness of him. But a comparison of those likenesses shows that each, while true in the general, is defective or incorrect in some one particular or more. Yet, when, in omitting the traits and hues in which they differ, I take and put together those in which they agree, what do I find but the Christ of the fourth Gospel? He, then, is the true Christ. Moreover, he is the true Christ, for he alone possesses those universal qualities, human and divine, which the true Christ must have, if he is to hold the position and accomplish the work which is assigned to him in Scripture, and which the testimony of our own eyes pronounce to be his. The Christ of the fourth Gospel is the Christ of humanity and the Christ of the Church universal. Moreover, he and he alone is the ideal Christ, for he and he alone meets and satisfies all man's deepest wants and highest aspirations. Here, then, is the Christ of God.

The conclusion necessitates the admission of a contemporary painter, and of the twelve whom can you select but the Apostle John? The conclusion, unconsciously formed and tacitly, yet firmly, held by the simple ones of the Church, enjoys the sanction of some of its greatest members. Of these I adduce three.

Luther, Lardner, and Priestley's testimony in favour of internal evidence, and of the fourth Gospel as by the Apostle John. Luther has repeatedly and variously expressed his views. I translate a passage to which I give preference, because, while it places the fourth Gospel in its proper position, it disapproves the wholesale and indiscriminate method with which the orthodoxy of the hour, placing its trust in external evidence and levelling many a real intrinsic distinction, attempts to prove at once the canonicity and the infallibility of every Scripture that forms part of the collection of writings called the New Testament.

"You must form a correct judgment of all the books, and make a distinction as to which are the best. For instance, John's Gospel and Paul's Epistles, especially the one to the Romans, and Peter's first Epistle, are the true kernel and criterion among all the books. These are truly the first, and every Christian ought to read these first and most, so as to become as familiar with them as with his daily bread. For, in these you find not many works and miracles of Christ described, but instead you find masterly descriptions how faith in Christ overcomes sin, death, and hell, and gives life, righteousness, and bliss. This is the true Gospel. For, if I must lack either the works or the words of Christ, I would gladly lack his works rather than his words. For the works help me not—but his words, which are spirit and life, as he himself testifieth (John vi., 63). Since, then, John gives few of the works of Christ, but much of his preaching—on the other hand, the first three Gospels supply many of his works, but little of his preaching; John's Gospel is specially precious—the Gospel, the crown of the Gospels—to be much preferred to and placed above those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Also, Paul's and Peter's Epistles far surpass these three Gospels. To sum up the facts: John's Gospel and his first Epistle, Paul's Epistles, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and Peter's first Epistle; these are the books which show you Christ and teach all that you need know for

salvation, whether or not you see or hear any other book or doctrine. Consequently, St. James's Epistle is truly an Epistle of straw compared with these, for it has nothing Evangelical in it."—"Works," xiv., 105.

One or two additional passages I supply, on account of their special value at the present hour.

"John's Gospel is the master-piece among the Gospels, for therein he constantly pursues this subject, viz., that Jesus Christ is truly man and truly God (*truly human* and *truly divine*, the writer thinks nearer the fact). These two natures he unites in himself."—vii., 2008.

"St. John the Evangelist speaks in words so common and so simple, that never were words so common and so simple uttered. Nevertheless, he declares in this simple manner truths which another would declare in lofty, swelling, yet obscure phraseology."—xxii., 2087.

The general principle on which these averments are made is expressed in these terms :—

"The office of a genuine Apostle is to proclaim the mission, the life, and the resurrection of Christ, and so lay the foundation of faith in him, as he himself says (John xv., 27) ; and herein agree all the truly sacred writings, for they all speak and testify of Christ. And this is the right touchstone whereby to try the books, namely, whether or not they testify of Christ (Rom. iii., 21 ; Acts x., 43), and Paul will know nothing but Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. ii., 2). That which does not teach Christ is not Apostolic, even though said by Peter or Paul. On the contrary, that which proclaims Christ is truly Apostolic, even though said by Judas, Annas, Pilate, or Herod."—xiv., 148.

What a noble assertion of Christian individualism is contained in the last extract, while the tendency of all these words of the great Reformer is to raise each believer in Christ far above Rome, Canterbury, Geneva, and all other usurpers of supremacy in things pertaining to God.

The exclusiveness of the tone and temper in the present day of what is called Biblical criticism is one of the unhealthy products of the extreme rationalism which has long tyrannised over the Protestant Church, and which in its turn is a legitimate but unamiable offspring of the atheistic philosophy that has been in the ascendant during the present century—the last and, in some respects, the lowest offspring of which is found in the writings of Ernest Renan. Earlier writers, while asserting and illustrating the external evidences of the Christian religion, took care to expound and recommend the internal. Of this impartiality and thoroughness Dr. Lardner offers a marked example. Witness these extracts from the preface to his invaluable work, "The Credibility of the Gospel History :"—

"The evidence of the truth of any history is either internal or external. The internal evidence depends on the probability of the things related, the consistence of the several parts, and the plainness and simplicity of the narration. The external evidence consists of the concurrence of other ancient writers of good credit, who lived at or near the time in which any things are said to have happened, and who bear testimony to the books themselves and their authors, or the facts contained in them. Every serious and attentive reader is able, in a great measure, to judge of the internal marks of the credi-

bility of the history contained in the New Testament, though he be very much assisted by the observation of others who are more curious or more judicious than himself. The external evidence of the truth of any ancient history, and particularly of the Gospel history, lies not so much within the reach of the generality of mankind. The faith of the unlearned, as to this part of the evidence for Christianity, is resolved very much into the credit and authority of the apologist. Let no one surmise that I give up the inspiration of the books of the New Testament. Nor am I aware that I have in the least weakened any argument that they were written under a special direction and influence of the spirit of God."

Instead of in anyway weakening the internal argument, Dr. Lardner has said much to confirm it, both in various wise and excellent remarks scattered through his invaluable writings, and specially in his two posthumous sermons on the "Internal Marks of Credibility in the New Testament," which present a fine specimen how well a thoroughly-learned as well as profoundly-pious mind can accommodate sound, exact, and deep scholarship to the offices of the pulpit. I transcribe a summary of these discourses, supplied by their author at the close of the second :—

"The points I have mentioned are, 1. These books bear the names of particular persons, except only the Epistle to the Hebrews. 2. They are written in a language and style suited to the character of the persons whose names they bear. 3. Here are characters and notes of times, as that such a thing happened when Herod was king of Judea, or when Pilate was governor. 4. The design of this history and of the first preaching of the Gospel has nothing in it that should tempt men to forgery and invention. 5. We find here a just and natural representation of matters, with all the appearance of likelihood and probability. 6. The impartiality of this history is another mark of its truth; many things are mentioned to appearance and in the eye of the world disadvantageous to the first disciples and first publishers of the Gospel, and many disorders and miscarriages of the first converts to Christianity. 7. The remarkable plainness and simplicity of the narration. 8. Here are many facts and circumstances related in a manner that they might easily be confuted if not true. 9. Here are evident marks of the honesty and integrity of the persons engaged in the first publishing of the Gospel, who were the witnesses of the main facts here related, and on which the truth of the Gospel depends. 10. Likewise that they were not persons of enthusiastic principles. 11. That miracles were wrought and extraordinary gifts conferred upon many persons, appears from directions given in letters to persons supposed to have themselves seen these works and shared in these benefits. 12. It appears from the books themselves that here is a harmony and agreement in these facts between divers independent witnesses, who did not write in concert and correspondence together. These particulars are sufficient for the making out this argument, and to satisfy us that these writers have all the characters of truth and probability which any history can have. Perhaps no history besides has them all in so eminent agreement; scarce any facts whatsoever are so well supported; and if they are true, we have the highest reason to rest assured that our religion is true and came from God. And shall we leave this religion—Christ, who has the words of eternal life? Shall we exchange the certain proofs of a future life for the uncertain, obscure arguments of immortality in Plato and Cicero?"—"Works" (ed. 1827), vol. ix., pp. 514–553.

Dr. Priestley was led to utter what follows by the appearance, in 1792, of a work, entitled, "Dissonance of the Four generally-

received Evangelists," in which a learned and pious, but heretical clergyman, by name Evanson, anticipated, but in a less modest tone, the issue raised by Bretschneider in questioning the authenticity of the Gospel, till then all but universally ascribed to the Apostle John. I transcribe a passage from Dr. Priestley's reply :—

"Mr. Evanson seems to suppose that our belief of the miracles of Christ and the Apostles depends upon the authenticity of the books of the New Testament which contain the account of them ; and certainly all our knowledge of these facts is derived from those books. But still our faith does not rest upon the testimony of the writers of those books, but upon that of those who first received the books, and who transmitted them to us as authentic, which they would not have done if they had not known them to be deserving of credit. It is not because four persons, though the most unexceptionable evidences, assert that Christ and his Apostles wrought miracles, that we believe the facts. We believe them on the evidence of the thousands and tens of thousands, themselves well acquainted with the facts, by whom it cannot be denied that the contents of these books were credited. It is on the testimony of all the primitive Christians, and in some measure of the heathen world also, that we believe in the miracles, the death, and resurrection of Christ, in consequence of which we are Christians. The books called the Gospels were not the cause but the effect of the belief of Christianity in the first ages. For Christianity had been propagated with great success long before those books were written ; nor had the publication of them any particular effect in adding to the number of Christian converts. Christians received the books because they knew beforehand that the contents of them were true ; and they were at that time of no further use than to ascertain and fix the testimony of living witnesses, in order to its being transmitted without variation to succeeding ages. For what could have been the preaching of the Gospel originally, but a recital of the discourses and miracles of Christ by those who were eye-witnesses of them, to those who were not ? The Gospels, therefore, contain the substance of all their preaching. While the eye-witnesses were living there was little occasion for books ; and, accordingly, no histories were written till about thirty years after the ascension of Christ, when the eye-witnesses were going off the stage, and, consequently, when their testimony, without being secured by writing, could not have been known with certainty, or have been transmitted to future ages. This was the natural and the actual progress of things in the primitive times. Since the belief of Christianity did not originally depend upon the authenticity of any books, the disproving* their authenticity will not affect its credibility. The present state of things with respect to the belief of Christianity cannot be accounted for without supposing the state of it in the last century to have been such as all authentic history represents it. In like manner, going back through every century, we shall find that every one of them requires the preceding to have been what history informs us that it was, till we find that it could not possibly have had the spread that it evidently had in the times of Pliny and of Nero, unless such a narrative as that of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles had been true, whether those particular books be authentic or not. We have no reason, therefore, from a regard to Christianity, to be alarmed at any effect that Mr. Evanson's (or Mons. E. Renan's) publication can have. Whatever we may think with respect to the authenticity of any particular books, all history is a standing and sufficient

* It is not a question of disproof, but simply a failure of proof, that is really at issue. Such failure is of no consequence, unless those who are concerned with it can show that their judicial position is now superior to the judicial position of eye-witnesses and their spiritual lineage.

evidence of the truth of Christianity, and affords a firm foundation of our faith."*—Priestley's "Letters to a Young Man." "Works" (ed. Rutt), vol. xx., 364 seq.

It is strange that words so wise and so solid should have been lost from sight in the religious denomination of which the speaker was, and will ever remain, perhaps, the most distinguished representative. This loss could not have occurred had not the old paths of our Unitarian literature been deserted by some who are honoured leaders of thought with us. No one would think of questioning their right to feed on whatever pasture grounds they please. But when persons habitually read a certain class of authors, they are very apt to follow the same direction of thought as that of their authorities. In this way currents of theology, less translucent and less nutritious than could be wished, have been introduced into England, one effect of which has been to weaken our foundations, and another to surrender the cause of Christ to Biblical criticism and transcendent speculation.

The words which have drawn from me the last paragraph, contain also materials for a probable account of the origin, authorship, and actual condition of the fourth Gospel, which, for the sake of conciseness and point, I shall throw into the form of an historical narrative.

John, the younger son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple, and the intimate and faithful Apostle of Jesus, joined his master's ranks at the beginning of his public ministry, and when he himself was under thirty years of age. He continued his endeavours for the spread of the Gospel till near the end of the first century. Thus, he was contemporaneous with the three successive generations which united the beginning of the Gospel with the termination of the apostolic age. The first generation, which began with the ministry of Jesus, he addresses in his first Epistle as "brethren" (ii., 7) and "fathers" (ii., 13, 14). It terminated about A.D. 60, nevertheless, transmitting into the next triad individuals whom in his address the Apostle had particularly in view. The second generation begins at 60 A.D., and ends at 90 A.D. These he calls "young men" (ii., 13) and "little children" (ii., 1), connected with his little children in ii., 18, is an intimation that "it is the last time"—the third generation opens. Clearly the writer's eyes are growing dim. John had treasured up the words of Jesus as they fell from his lips, not only in his heart, but on his tablets. At first he was prompted solely by loving admiration. Often, however, did he afterwards dwell in fond and regretful memory upon them. The wondrous deeds of

* The whole of this admirable exposure of Evanston should be carefully perused by the student. Not ill-prepared for adjudicating on these issues is he who is familiar with the writings of Lardner and Priestley, in which may be read by anticipation many an objection, accompanied by a sufficient reply, which later critics have taken to the authenticity of the fourth Gospel.

Christ were also preserved in recollection, if not in written memoranda. So long as the Great One remained on earth it never occurred to John to mould his materials into a consecutive memoir; and, when Jesus had passed through the portal of death into the heaven of heavens, John thought as little of turning to his materials for any other purpose than to refresh his memory, to rejoice and comfort his heart, and probably to correct a feature or add a touch to them. Meanwhile the epistolary literature of the New Testament was in the course of formation. The whole of this second generation, and the first ten years of the second, was a period of intense hope and confident expectation. Jesus was on the point of returning to earth for the vindication of his cause, and the cause of God and man. As the expected hour approached, writings called Gospels began to make their appearance, prompted by a desire of sustaining the over-strained and sometimes sorely-wrung heart of the Church, by proving that, notwithstanding adverse signs and distressing delays, the "last days" had come, and the new era was about to be inaugurated. Proceeding from intensely-coloured Hebrew minds, and intended specially for as intensely-longing and panting Hebrew expectants, these Gospels, while containing many sayings and many doings of Jesus in their primal shape and colour, contained also others deeply-dyed with the erroneous expectations of the nation. Our Matthew and Mark may be taken for such compositions. At last the plot of the drama gradually unfolds itself. Jerusalem is captured and trodden under foot of the Gentiles. Then the returning of a visible Christ is recognised as a gross misconception. Jesus "liveth for evermore" in the inner presence of his Father. Christianity is, in consequence, a purely spiritual religion. This most important revelation, made of God in his providence, was received and welcomed by the most religious and the most benevolent of the "fathers," the "brethren," and the older of the "young men," having been hitherto transmitted orally from disciple to disciple, from father to son, and, so far as possible, kept pure and uninfected by Jewish elements; and now it must be published to the world, so as to correct false notions in the Church, and spread true ideas everywhere. Then was it that the Apostle John, having before him what had been already written, and feeling how much it was all below the reality, and unequal to the needful work, composed his "Spiritual Gospel," as well as wrote his first Epistle, from materials in his possession, in part revised, in part supplemented by living recollections supplied by brethren and fathers of his circle. The lateness of the day, and the object of the work, stamped upon it a deep argumentative character, and appended at the close attestations from coevals of the writer, who desired before all things to add their testimony to the testimony of their loved and venerated brother, the sole surviving Apostle. A desire for the

utmost accuracy in a writing thus designed to correct and supplement already existing Gospels kept the Scripture in its native privacy till near, or even after, the close of the author's life. Only by degrees, however, did the Gospel make its way, being opposed by a state of mind which still retained deep and strong Jewish impressions; nor was it till about fifty years after the death of its author that it succeeded in taking position by the side of the other acknowledged Gospels. From that time, however, down till recently the Church with one voice receives and sanctions the actual four.

I have advisedly called this a *probable* account. Its real worth others will estimate better than myself. I am not aware, however, that it contains any essential particular for which some good authority, ancient or modern, may not be adduced. Some illustration of the fact may be given in a few more words, taken from Dr. Priestley's "Letter to Young Men." Speaking specially of Mr. Evanson's objections to "the Gospel of John," he says:—

"There are many striking peculiarities in his Gospel; but all that can be justly inferred from this circumstance is that he is an original writer, and did not copy from any other, though antiquity says that he had seen the works of the other Evangelists. On this account he has not many things in common with them, and when he does go over the same part of the history he appears to me to have done it for the sake of greater exactness; for in all those cases he is remarkably circumstantial, as in the account of the feeding of 'the five thousand,' and of Peter denying his Master. These parts, as well as every other in his Gospel, bear more internal, unequivocal marks of being written by an eye-witness than any other writings whatever, sacred or profane. His view seems to have been, without directly saying that the other Gospels were not sufficiently exact, to relate the story in a more correct manner."—p. 430.

The great names just cited refer to earlier periods of critical history. I proceed to adduce the highest authority of the present hour.

Only, in general, two kinds of German criticism makes its way into the mind of English students, and that by translations. One is that of a spurious traditionalism, which, affecting to uphold orthodoxy, in reality betrays it, by the speculative leaven with which it is pervaded. The other, borrowing from some form of the fashionable philosophy, Hegelianism, an extremely negative purpose and direction, openly and constantly assails the foundations alike of Christianity and religion. Of the varieties of this latter, the Tübingen school, with the late learned and able Dr. F. C. Baur at its head, has most influence in this country, though now on the decline in its native land. Neither an adulterated traditionalism, nor an extreme speculativism, is likely to produce pure history. Nor, indeed, have they done so. Less successful in this matter than even Strauss are Baur and Renan, for, in addition to speculative perversions, they write what they call history under the bias of certain laws originated by themselves. Is there, then, no theologian who, writing free from the deep colourings of specu-

lation, writes the history of the literature of the New Testament under the sole guidance of actual facts, a cultivated understanding, and a pure life? There is. I refer to Professor Reuss, of Strassburg. From the fourth edition of his trustworthy and exhaustive work, *Die Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften Neuen Testaments* ("The History of the Sacred Writings of the New Testament), Braunschweig, 1864, I extract what follows, which, in the main, corroborates the view which I have myself ventured to express :—

TESTIMONY IN REGARD TO THE GOSPELS, FREE FROM SPECULATIVE BIAS : PROFESSOR REUSS.—"The Evangelical history has its origin in traditions, partly written down, partly remembered by eye-witnesses. Hence, materials for the history. The earliest forms of the written history go back before the downfall of Jerusalem. To this period belongs a document, still in our possession, the authorship of which must be referred to Matthew the Publican, one of the Twelve Apostles, whose principal object was to record the words and sayings of Jesus. Another historical document—this, too, in our New Testaments—was drawn up by a pupil of the Apostles, John of Jerusalem, known by the name of Mark, whom antiquity represents as in connection, now with Paul, now with Peter. From the mouth of the latter he received recollections of their common Master, which he wrote down without following a rigid order, yet doing his best neither to omit nor to misrepresent anything he had learnt. While Matthew and Mark thus laid the foundations of the history of Jesus, others, whose names are lost, performed a similar task, and contributed much of what now stands in our Gospels. Out of these original writings sprang our Gospels, and other similar compositions, no longer extant. Of these, that which is according to Mark is the most ancient and the most original. It is, however, less complete than that of Matthew. The two are independent the one of the other. The former is distinguished by supplying facts done, the latter by supplying words spoken, by Christ. Utterances of Jesus, as given in Matthew, were written down shortly before the fall of Jerusalem. The book itself came into its present form within the last quarter of the first century. The third Gospel contains the results of a deliberate, and, in some sense, critical review of existing Evangelical histories, which had proceeded from persons who had seen and served Jesus. The author widened the historical field so as to take under his view the earliest events connected with the Church. The first part bears the name of the 'Gospel according to Luke;' the second is called 'Acts (not 'The Acts') of the Apostles.' The author not only knew but used historical sources of information as well as oral communications peculiarly his own, so far as the Gospel is concerned. The composition of the first part is later than the fall of Jerusalem; that of the second shows the events as distant from the narrator. Viewed as within its self-imposed limits, the Book of Acts is a rich fountain of information respecting the days which followed the death of Jesus. Ecclesiastical tradition uniformly names as the author of these two books, forming one history, a companion of Paul named Luke, a physician, born at Antioch, probably a convert from heathenism. All these historical memorials come forth from oral communications preserved in the bosom of the Church by the disciples. They restrict themselves to the duty of describing Jesus as he appeared to the passive observation of his immediate circle of attendants, who were in a condition to apprehend merely the external and popular form of his person and his teachings. This simple, child-like manner of narration, which in faith takes in the miraculous without measuring it by general principles, and commits at once to head and heart the spoken wisdom of the Master in its granules, stamps on human souls his image indestructibly.

"The fourth Gospel, which comes to us under the name of John, the son of Zebedee, is no history of Jesus and his doctrine after the manner of the other

Gospels, but a representation in an historical form of the Christian faith with the person of Christ as its centre, and this representation contains on one side a picture of the conflict between the world and the truth revealed in Jesus, and on the other a description of the intimate blessedness of the chosen ones who give themselves up to him as the light of life. These materials, to which the narrative furnishes merely the framework, are mostly set forth in words and speeches from the lips of Jesus, and at the beginning summarised in a short prologue which is not the preface of an historian but the programme of a theologian. Not words preserved by memory are here the principal point, but ideas begot of speculation (I should say of contemplation, *i.e.*, of the original, *viz.*, Christ himself, and meditation on the results) conceived of sentiment and born as faith. The great question in the earliest days of the Church as to the validity of the Mosaic law this book does not touch, or rather it solves it by an internal and ideal conception of the Gospel of Christ. Grace and truth are come into the world by Christ; all before, Zion as well as Gerizim, though unequal, stands on a lower platform of revelation; and love, true love, the breath of the life of the Church here and hereafter, is a new commandment. The disciples, controlled before the death of Jesus by dark minds and carnal misapprehension, appear on his departure from earth as partaking his spirit, acknowledging him alone as the True Shepherd, and if the spirit makes a difference, not Peter, but another is nearest the Master's heart. While the facts which serve for the illustration of the doctrine are to be distinguished from formal history, and the speeches of Jesus which illustrate the conflict with the world serve a higher purpose, as a free creation of the thinker, there present themselves in the substance of the work a crowd of occasional particulars, being unimportant data of times and places, personal relations, and particular circumstances of all kinds, so that one is involuntarily led to the admission of an eye-witness in the writer, or at least of his informant. Especially does this appear certain from a comparison with the accounts of the other Evangelists, so far as they were parallel, and that partly in very important matters. Accordingly, if, by the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, you mean the credibility of the narrated facts, under the above-mentioned limitation, no well-grounded doubt can in general be raised against it. However, the writer's conception of Christ runs through the book. The fact does not exclude an historical source. Certainly, in not a few points do we discover links with the preaching of Jesus as reported by the Synoptics, when closely studied many a passage yields an echo to the other narratives; and the foreign hue of the whole may in part be explained by the author's peculiar aim. In general, the elevation of the thoughts itself declares that they are taken from the clearest fountain, and are rooted in the best ground.

"The conflict we have spoken of comes to its crisis in the passion when evil first triumphs in Jesus' death, and then is finally overcome by his resurrection, the glory of which is shared by all whose eyes and hearts bear witness of the risen Christ. The book was written before the middle of the second century. That John, Zebedee's son, was its author cannot be proved by rigorous external evidence. The actual distance of the book from the age of the Apostles is bridged over, or rather filled up, by the testimony of him who wrote the appendix to the Gospel, as well as by the unprejudiced testimony of the first Epistle, independently as well as anciently accredited. Moreover, the peculiar way in which the person of Zebedee's son is interwoven in the narrative speaks for his having had a share in the composition of the work rather than for an intentional deception. But the spirit of the book is not touched by the question — 'Who wrote it?' and to make this known is of greater moment than to unveil the secret of its birth."—pp. 175-224.

It cannot be denied that the foregoing considerations and testimonies yield no small support to the ancient and still commonly-received view that the Apostle John is mainly answerable for the fourth Gospel. This position receives strength

from a correct knowledge of the internal character of the composition.

What does the fourth Gospel itself teach as to its origin? Current theology makes the Gospel metaphysical in its method, and dogmatical in its thought. Guided by Christian or Gnostic speculation, the writer intended to assign to Jesus the position which as the Christ, the son of God, he held in the scale of being. With him Christ was God the Son, the second person in the Trinity. Such a view militates powerfully against the Johannine authorship, for all evidence goes to show that the Ecclesiastical dogma of the Trinity did not reach any such advanced stage of development till long after the death of the Apostle.

We have not far to go to find the truth. The writer of the fourth Gospel has himself declared his object in writing the work. Expressly acknowledging that his composition omits "many other signs done by Jesus in the presence of his disciples," he adds:—"But these things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in his name."—John xx., 30, 31.

Here is an explicit and emphatic declaration of the writer's aim from his own pen. Strange that this should not have been studied preferentially.

Before I ask attention to its import, I must notice one or two preliminaries; and, first, I beg the reader to cast his eye on a manifest implication that what is here recorded is what was "done by Jesus in the presence of his disciples." Clearly the writer had a great whole before his mental vision. That great whole consisted of what was "done by Jesus in the presence of his disciples;" and from that whole he selects that which he judged fit to produce the result he both desired and declared—which was to produce a certain conviction or faith. What, then, have we in this Gospel but a selection from the mass of deed and word which had been produced by Jesus in the presence of his disciples. It follows that the book is autoptic. From first to last (speaking generally) it records what Jesus said and did, and what his disciples beheld and witnessed. But such a declaration could be made by no one except a disciple. The Scripture, then, rests on Apostolic authority. The name of the writer is a secondary matter. Not secondary, however, is its absence. What reason could the disciple have for withholding his name? It may have been generally known, so that there was no occasion to mention it. And here we have one of those conditions which cannot now be reproduced. Doubtless, when the writing first came forth its author was known in a certain, perhaps a very wide circle. Nor is it improbable that it was that circle which inscribed the name of John at the head of the Gospel. Here are probabilities which may serve to show how much more auspicious was the position of the first Christians than the position

of the most accomplished critic to-day, and ought to read to all judges in the case a lesson of modesty and moderation. And that the rather, because not impossibly the author shrank from the assumption there might have appeared to be in publishing himself as the author of the Gospel. Such reticence is quite in keeping with that feature in Christ's teaching which forbids personal assumption and display (Matt. xxiii., 5 seq.), and so far encourages the idea of our having to do here with a disciple of the genuine metal. Strictly speaking, the entire writing is to us at least anonymous. Yet it has survived the wreck of eighteen hundred years, and is still held in highest estimation by the most cultivated persons on the whole surface of the globe. In the self-denial implied in the circumstances of the case, I find true sublimity. While now every religious pamphleteer prints his name in his title page, the author of one of the everlasting productions of the human mind leaves his readers uninformed as to who he was. There is something heroic in so complete a disregard of human opinion. Well and practically had the Evangelist studied that word of his Master which he recorded when Jesus compassionately spake of such as had not confessed him, lest they should be excommunicated, "for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (xii., 42, 43). Ah! poor human nature was in its weaknesses the same then as it is now, and the record is "one among a thousand" of the words of Jesus found in the Gospels which unite into a very full and ample affirmation of the moral reality which underlies the Evangelical narratives. At all events, a narrator of so high a mark as we have seen our writer to be was not one who was likely, as Renan insinuates, to be either a dupe or a cheat.

But though anonymous to us, this Gospel was not altogether anonymous at the time of its publication. This, which has just been made evident, becomes more manifest from the use of a periphrasis by its author, apparently descriptive of himself. If the last chapter, as is not improbable, comes from the pen that wrote the previous ones, then the writer seems to claim to be "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (xxi., 7), adding, that he was the same as "leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?" (20). Another addition, apparently from the same pen, declares:—"This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things" (24). Again, another testimony, clearly from a different source, subjoins:—"We know that his testimony is true."

A writing thus attested can hardly be called anonymous. And yet no name now appears. Nevertheless, the author seems to be pointed at, and pointed at by a significant circumlocution, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Such an indication implies corresponding knowledge on the part of the contemplated readers of the book. The author may have been known in that

primæval circle as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." As known by them he was known by all who were within his purview. The Evangelist clearly had no thought of posterity. The Master was absorbed in the interests of his present scholars. Again, what simplicity of character and purpose. The "Ye" in xx., 31, was the Ephesian Church. If only the teacher could make them believe in Christ truly and deeply, he felt his task was done. Their faith in Christ would quicken them with the true life; and for the rest—well, he does not seem to have had a vivid thought of what would follow. Yet, below the surface of his mind there must have been something to this effect—"and your faith will propagate itself until it become the faith of the world."

The whole could not be more natural if "the disciple whom Jesus loved" was the Apostle John himself. And certainly he was present, being one of the "two sons of Zebedee," mentioned in xxi., 2. Of these, James was put to death by Herod Agrippa in A.D. 44. John alone remains. And that John was "the disciple whom Jesus loved" appears the rather from the covert manner in which, according to his custom, he points at rather than points out himself when he speaks of the "two sons of Zebedee."

If so, then the author of the Gospel was an Israelite. And as such he appears in the Scripture itself. Is he not familiar with the Old Testament? Does he not quote it according to the original Hebrew, as well as the Greek translation? His style, too, partakes far more of the Hebrew parallelism than the Greek periodicity. Then, how extensive and accurate his acquaintance with the geography of the land. Exceptions have been pleaded, but they are either unreal or inconsiderable. He cannot, it is said, be a Jew, for he speaks of the Jews too unfavourably. As if any terms could be too unfavourable on the part of one who loved the prophet whom the Jews had stoned. But, by "the Jews," the writer means not the nation so much as its wicked rulers; and, in denouncing them, he only shows how entirely he is in agreement, not only with the Synoptics, but also with Jesus himself.

The presumption, then, is that the writer was, if not the Apostle John, yet one of Hebrew blood. Moreover, tradition is said to represent John as spending the latter days of a protracted life in the midst of pagan culture. Accordingly, the medium in which the work was produced was in substance Hebrew, while on the surface it was Greek. Such a medium would naturally produce a Hebrew tone of thought, wearing a Greek shape and hue. Then, it was far on in the first century when the writer took pen in hand. Already the Synoptical Gospels existed. Written not so much to record the history of Jesus as to forward his work, they naturally and properly took such a tone and colour as best fitted them for acceptance with those for whom they were

intended. The Hebrew want was satisfied ; so was the Roman ; so was the general want—the want of the liberal and historic thought of the day. One want, however, remained unsupplied ; namely, the want of a strictly and purely spiritual exposition of Christ and Christianity, which, if effectually handled, would not only meet the yearnings of all truly and deeply religious persons, whether lettered or unlettered, but present the Lord in his original lineaments, and while, as of necessity, still remaining inferior to the Great Original, yet approach him more nearly than any Hebraised portrait possibly could. Who could accomplish the high and solemn work ? An Apostle it must be. But what Apostle ? One whose loving nature had inmost sympathy with Jesus. Only love on the part of the painter could reproduce that loving Saviour. However, at the time there was no choice. The sole remaining Apostle was John the younger, son of Zebedee. But he was the Apostle of love. Witness, if not the first Epistle, yet the general tradition of the Church. Here, then, is the needed and the competent hand. John survives, and John, of all the Apostles, loves Christ with a love so deep, warm, and sympathising, as to be able to know Christ as he was, and to distinguish the genuine elements from the spurious. Moreover, as an Israelite as well as an Apostle, he would be the more suitable for, as well as more earnest in, the task, because the strict monotheism of the Gospel was threatened at least from without. Films of theosophic speculation coming from the East, and making men ashamed of the simplicity of divine truth, made them also dream of unrealities of various kinds. Jesus was a man only in appearance ; in reality, he was the loftiest of the aeons, or a pre-existent spirit. Who knows but that already “the Word” that “*was* GOD” came to be first called “God the Word,” and then to be identified with “Jesus the Christ.” At least, germs of the transmutation were springing up in Alexandria, and possibly were not without dim images and imperfect representatives in Ephesus, the central emporium of the speculative fancies of the remote East. The inevitable tendency of the logical speculation was to impair and weaken the pure and genuine spirituality of the Gospel. It was, indeed, transmuting the religion of Jesus into a philosophy. Denying the son by disowning his humanity, and making him in some way second to, if not equal with, God, it impaired God’s sovereignty, and so denied the Father. Hence ensues *the true doctrinal position of the author*. Two central verities must be asserted. The Father is God, and as such supreme. The son is man, and as such dependent. Yet, while in nature the son is human, in spirit, office, and work he is divine. This, the genuine ideas of the Gospel, John resolves to assert, and in doing so he has bequeathed to all posterity a religion universal in virtue of its origin, spirit, aim, tendency, and effect.

Combined with the Gospel is an Epistle. The letter, which now bears the name of the First of John, was manifestly written by one of those whom Luke (i., 2) describes "as eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" (1 John 1-4), and addressed to persons of the first and second generation of Christian confessors (i., 12-14). The object of the author is not merely to withstand a growing propension toward the surrounding paganism (i., 4 seq.; ii., 15 seq.), but to counteract "many antichrists" teaching false doctrine by denying that "Jesus is the Christ," and so "denying the Father and the Son;" "for whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father." "Let that, therefore, abide in you which *ye have heard from the beginning*. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye shall also continue in the Son and in the Father; and this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things, and even as He hath taught you ye shall abide in him (in the Son and so in the Father). Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit; *and we have seen and do testify* that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God dwelleth in him, and he in God. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

Here we have Christ and antichrist clearly presented by and for eye-witnesses in their distinctive features, as thus—

CHRIST.

<i>The Father</i>	<i>The Son;</i>
is God,	who is come
is spirit,	in the flesh
is love,	to be the
and so	Saviour of
sends	the world.

ANTICHRIST

denies that Jesus is come in the flesh, and is Christ; the denial, implying that something else is come in the flesh is Christ, thus denying the Son denies also the Father.

This is from the beginning, and is known to be true by the indwelling Spirit of God, in union with personal knowledge.

The turning point in this matter is coming in the flesh, for "to come in the flesh" is the attribute of Christ; and every person or thing of which this may not be affirmed is antichrist. The term flesh denotes man considered as liable to sin, weakness, and death (Ps. lvi., 4; lxxviii., 39; Ephes. vi., 12). Hence, to come

in the flesh is "to be manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii., 16), to be "sent in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii., 3), and so to be a "partaker of flesh and blood" (Heb. ii., 14); that is, a man (i., 6-9). Accordingly, Jesus, being one with his brethren of mankind, was for the suffering of death on their behalf crowned with glory and honour, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man; for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted (ii., 9-18). Consequently, to deny the manhood of Christ is to deny Christ, as to deny God's Christ is to deny God himself. By birth, then, Jesus was a man. The fact is emphasised by the preference given to the word flesh, in order to show not only the special fitness of Jesus for the most momentous of tasks, namely, to save men by giving them the true life—the life of God, but to illustrate by contrast the majesty of Christ, regarded as rising from the lowest condition into the highest in the moral and spiritual world.

And what have we here but an instance of that law of God's universal providence by which the humblest of his children are raised in virtue of their humility out of the lowliest lot into the highest moral glory? A lowly condition fosters a lowly spirit, and a lowly spirit is ever the most aspiring, and so lifts its possessor to seats truly more lofty than such as are occupied by kings and princes of the earth. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v., 3). Coming in the flesh himself, and yet rising to the dignity of the son of God, Jesus was well able to say: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (John xii., 32).

Jesus human. Another important verity contained in these representations must be thrown into prominence. It is that the manhood of Christ is one of the fundamental facts of the Gospel, the denial of which is, according to the Epistle, the denial of Christianity. The reason is, that it is his manhood which makes his influence of special applicability and value to man. Were he not a man, he could be no special source of influence to man. His mediatorial efficacy lies in his being human. The divine element already existed, and operated variously in God for human good. The speciality of the Gospel is that herein God manifests himself in one of our race, and so makes himself more exactly, more fully, more impressively known than otherwise. Nor is there in such a manifestation anything anomalous. In one sense all revelation is mediatorial, since God is not seen directly by the human eye, but mediately, or through signs and tokens. Christ's mediatorship is, in consequence, in full harmony with the entire method of God's witnessing of himself. The sole speciality is that this display of himself takes place in a human being. Accordingly, here we have the distinctive peculiarity of the Gospel. Not that God fails to be seen in other members of

the human family. But in them the manifestation is partial—here one ray, there another, and there again a third. But all human possibilities of the moral and spiritual order were collected and concentrated in Jesus, who thus became the archetypal man, presenting, in the fulfilment of God's will in a human being, the ideal of his race. As such all his qualities are real. Real is his moral excellence in every phase; real also are his sufferings; real his death; real his resurrection. The whole story in all its variations, whether sad or joyous, is a grand and quickening reality. Not only did Jesus suffer hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, agony, death, as they are suffered by us, our moral and religious experiences were all his; "for we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. iv., 15, 16). Never did an exhortation rest on a more solid foundation. Because Jesus overcame sin, so may we, for he is our brother; and because Jesus survived the stroke of death, so shall we, for he is our brother. But the ground of analogy would utterly fail had Jesus been an aeon, a seraph, an angel, a pre-existent being of any sort. Yet falsities of the kind have ever fascinated men, the rather because they have been, and, alas! are accustomed to similar falsities in their civil and social life, making them place rank above character, and prefer show to reality. Thus was it in the first century, when the doctrine of a crucified man was "unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God: for the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. i., 2 seq.). The true folly lay (and lies) on the side of speculation. The theory that Jesus in his nature was something higher than a man, takes all meaning by taking all reality from his earthly history. How could a God be tried? how could an archangel have human experiences? how could a pre-existent being have grown in favour with God and man, as he grew in stature? (Luke ii., 52.) How could "the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, (who) fainteth not, neither is weary," be wearied with a journey over the few miles that separate Samaria from Jerusalem? (Is. xl., 28; John iv., 6.) How could he, of whom it is said, "There is no searching of his understanding," be ignorant of the day of judgment? (Mark xiii., 32.) Had Jesus possessed personal recollections of everlasting celestial beatitude, soon to pass into everlasting celestial beatitude again without restriction or drawback, what to him were the crosses, the troubles, the persecutions of a few brief months? What the agony of the garden? What the torture of crucifixion? Or, rather, could there have been either agony or

torture? And those tears shed at the tomb of Lazarus; and that cry of anguish on the cross—how could they be real? The real seat of suffering is the mind, and the mind in the supposed case is incapable of suffering. To hold such views is to confound all distinctions, linguistic as well as others, and to rob Jesus of all merit and all influence. The very element—the divine—which theory adds to the passion in order to make the atonement equal in quantity to the alleged infinite sin of man, does, in truth, exhaust all its intrinsic moral value, and transmute the whole into a mere theatrical scene, in which the human is not human, nor the divine divine, but solely the brutal soldiery and the scoffing priests are, in fact, as bad and as hateful as they seem to be. Then truly Christ died in vain, for his death was only painless transition, and the love by which it is said to have been prompted is of no more value than it cost. The death of a God (if such language has meaning) can be no more meritorious or impressive than the decay of a rose or the sinking of a zephyr.

The reader is now in a condition to see that Ecclesiastical speculation strips Jesus of his proper humanity, leaving, in truth, no Christ at all—no Saviour at all. The “Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope,” is the one mediator between the one God and man—the *man Christ Jesus*, who gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. i., 1; ii., 5).

Christ divine. Having thus seen wherein lay the lowliness of Jesus, as being flesh, we cannot leave the theme without ascertaining wherein stood the altitude to which he attained so as to be “the Son of God.” This same Epistle contains the required information:—“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not; beloved, now are we sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is; and everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (iii., 1-3). Hence, it appears that the sonship in question is something common to Christ and to Christians, and something common in such a way that ignorance of the one involves ignorance of the other, so that they cannot understand the sonship of Christians, who do not understand the sonship of Christ. It follows that the sonship of Christ is fundamentally the same as the sonship of Christians, so that the former reveals the latter, and the latter images the former. Moreover, the sonship of Christians is a growing principle, which ever lifts Christians into a nearer approach to the sonship of Christ, and this it does by making them pure after the measure as well as the manner of his purity.

The antithesis of this happy condition is sin, against which the writer protests again and again, and from which Christ came to rescue men:—“Whosoever committeth sin committeth law-

lessness ; for sin is lawlessness ; and ye know that he (Christ) was manifested in order to remove our sins ; and sin is not in him ; whosoever remaineth in him doth not sin ; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him " (1 John iii., 4, 5).

From first to last, then, the relation between Christ and Christians is ethical and spiritual, even as the relation between Christ, Christians, and the world is ethical and spiritual ; on the one side holiness, love, and life ; on the other sin, hatred, and death.

These relations, thus declared in Scripture, are so manifest as to be known and felt of all men ; the virtuous certainly, nor less certainly, alas ! the vicious. They are respectively attested as the great realities of earth by universal experience. That experience, possessed by all, is possessed by true disciples of Christ supereminently. Hence, their possession of "an unction" which enables them to discriminate between divine truth and worldly untruth ; between the pure gold of the sanctuary and the alloys which assume its name, and too often alter if not destroy its character. But, as the criterion is moral, so moral are the objects to which it is applied. Moral, in consequence, is the verdict. The grace of distinguishing the spirits, then, is not logic, or speculation, or creeds, or catechisms, but a holy and loving heart, which makes your sonship (or relation to God) similar to the sonship of Jesus himself.

And thus true Christians have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and that fellowship consists in the exercise of the spiritual gifts and graces that all possess in common. Consequently, the true Christian life is the life which the Son receives from his Father and communicates to his brethren.

These are grand and ever-enduring verities, the disclosure of which we owe to God in Christ, and the possession of which is the way of sanctity, peace, and blessedness.

Thus does God bear witness of himself in the literature of the New Testament, and in its principal personage, Jesus Christ ; and thus is the criterion we have previously acquired sanctioned and honoured, while its application is justified and recommended.

What we have now been taught in the Epistle we shall find repeated in the Gospel. If the Epistle was written by John, by whom but John was the Gospel written ? If the Gospel is found to contain the same verities in another form, it cannot fail to suggest the right answer to the question.

The poem contains a striking passage which of itself establishes the nature of the divine sonship. The true light which, coming into the world lighteth every man, gave to as many as received him the power or the privilege to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name ; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John i., 12, 13). See you not that the lineage that is of supreme

value is the spiritual lineage which is of God? Descent "of bloods;" race distinctions are set at naught, sexual descent is set at naught, noble descent is set at naught to enhance the value of divine descent, and that divine descent (being born of God) belongs to men—to such men as, having received the true light, have received also the privilege to become sons of God. Hence, divine sonship is co-extensive with genuine Christianity. This divine sonship they receive from him who is pre-eminently the divine Son. It follows that spiritual birth is the great object of the divine favour, even as it is God's highest gift to the world in and through "the Son of his love." Before this hierarchy, or rather this theogony, the distinction of all earthly descents grow pale and vanish. To be of the seed of Abraham was the boast of the Jew; to be a hero's son was the pride of the pagan, and men of all orders, degrees, and races prided themselves on their extraction, ordinary though it might be, but the only true aristocracy is the aristocracy of heaven. To be a son of God, indeed; that is, one filled with the light and actuated by the spirit of God, is a high privilege, but the highest of privileges a man can enjoy is to be *the* son of God. Thus of Jesus Christ, who was spiritually

"Great David's greater son,"

may the words be used which the Psalmist employed of the King of Judah:—"He shall cry unto me: Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation; also I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth" (Ps. lxxxix., 26, 27).

Mark the word first-born. Then turn to Psalm ii., 7, and mark these words:—"Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee," and you will learn that God's anointed are the born or begotten of God. Hence a rule: In Scriptural language to be born or begotten of God, in other terms, to be a son of God, is the same as to "be taught of God," to be chosen and honoured of God, so as to love and serve him. Already had the second Isaiah, anticipating a period of religious revival, declared

"And all thy children shall be taught of Jehovah;
And great shall be the peace of thy children."

And Jesus himself is represented by our Evangelist (John vi., 45) as quoting the prophet's words in order to illustrate the proposition, "Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me;" while, in regard to himself, he asserts repeatedly that all he had and all he taught he had received from, and been taught by, the Father—*e.g.*,

"The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth" (v., 20).

"All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (xv., 15).

And while declaring—

"The son can do nothing of himself" (v., 19).

And thus distinguishing himself from God, of whom he says—

“My Father is greater than I” (x., 29).

“My Father is greater than all” (xiv., 28).

He distinguishes himself from his disciples (the eldest son from the younger) by saying—

“Not that anyone hath seen the Father, save he which is of God ; he hath seen the Father” (vi., 46).

Yet, lest he should appear to sunder the bond which unites the Father with all his children, Jesus extends the privilege of the spiritual vision of God to all who learn of him. He adds—

“If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also ; and hence-forwards ye know him and have seen him ; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (xiv., 7).

And, in order to make the privilege as wide as the Church, he finishes by promising “the Comforter,” “the Holy Spirit,” “the Spirit of Truth,” “whom the Father will send in my name ; he shall teach you all things” (xiv., 16 seq.).

From these Scriptures it is manifest that, according to Jesus, as portrayed by the Evangelist, to be taught of God is the same as to be born or begotten of God ; and that this birth or sonship is common with Christ and Christians in nature, while in degree Christ, even as the mediate source to them of all they have and are, stands high above all ; high enough, indeed, to receive from his Father and their Father, his God and their God, the light, power, and peace which he in turn bestows upon them. Here is the unity of the Church, of which Christ is the head, under “God who is over all.” Here is the one flock, having many folds, led by the one Good Shepherd. It follows that Christian sonship is Christian vitality. The vitality, divine in origin, is divine also in its effects. It is not a creed, nor a ritual, nor a priesthood, but the Spirit of God poured out on all believers, to be finally poured out on all flesh. And if you would know what that Spirit is, call to mind the promise given by Christ :—

“The Spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth ; for he shall not speak of himself ; he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you” (xvi., 13-15).

The true sonship, then, is to possess the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of Christ. That spirit is described in the following :—

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you ; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love ; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (xv., 9-14).

The short course of Scriptural instruction we have received from the Evangelist tells us what he means, when he declares Jesus—when he had become the dwelling-place of God—to be “the only begotten Son of the Father.” While, as if to remove any possible misconception, the Evangelist himself adds :—

“And of his (the only begotten Son, the first-born Son) fulness have all we received, even grace upon grace ; for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (i., 16, 17).

And in order to sum up all he had taught in the prologue, he ends by this important statement :—

“No one hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath set him forth” (i., 18).

God in himself is invisible to man, but he dwells in Jesus, who in consequence is his son, image, representative, and so he reveals himself to man. Thus “the unknown God” becomes known in Christ, who is in consequence “the way, the truth, and the life.” These are permanent relations, for God’s presence in Christ is permanent. The fact is signified in the interposed sentence : “Who (Jesus) is in (or on) the bosom of the Father ;” that is, the Father’s darling, and, as such, “full of grace and truth,” not for himself only, nor so much as for the world. Yes ; he is and ever remains in this most intimate and most endeared communion with the Father ; the Spirit does not come and go, as in ordinary sons, but remains with him. It is a constant, a ceaseless, as well as a boundless power of grace and truth. So taught the Baptist, according to this the fourth Gospel :—

“I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not ; but He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and *remaining on him*, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God” (i., 32-34).

Christian art describes the descent of the Spirit on Jesus by external and visible symbols, and so has done much to make the most purely spiritual religion very unspiritual. There needed not any such carnalising influence, for man’s lower nature is but too powerful to bring God’s truth down to his own materialistic level. Let the reader be on his guard. These with which we are dealing are all spiritual realities, and only by our own spirits can they be truly apprehended and fully realised.

Two witnesses to Christ have just been presented to our eyes. The first is couched under the pronoun *we*, nay, rather “all we.” These witnesses, whoever they may be, are not inexperienced persons. The Apostle Paul says of himself, “We believe, and therefore speak” (2 Cor. v., 13).

The same solid reason for speaking was possessed by the witnesses under consideration. These are their words :—“Of his

(Christ's) fulness have all we received, even grace upon grace." The *we* of the Evangelist cannot, like the *we* of Paul, be a plural for a singular pronoun, because it is preceded by "all"—"all we," in the original "we all." Who are they? Whatever the class may be, clearly it includes the Evangelist. Here, then, we have come upon the author, and as clearly he is one who has personal experience of Christ and Christianity. What if this is the Apostle John? Nothing in the text says "No," and much seems to say "Yes." But whether no or yes, beyond a doubt the witness is an eye-witness. He is the same as, a few words before, declares, "We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten Son, full of grace and truth" (i., 14), and this is said of the "flesh," or the man, into whom the word (or God revealed) had come, and "dwelt among us." Obviously, too, the time of the scene is the commencement of the ministry of Jesus. This took place when Christ was seen, that is, first seen. Accordingly, what is called the incarnation is contemporaneous with Christ's public appearance. All before was preparation, now all is manifestation on one side, and all is seeing on the other. The eye-witness, then, must have been an Apostle—one who had companied with Jesus from the first (Acts i., 21). That Apostle is called "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John xxi., 2, 7, 20, 24). Our Gospel, then, is the product of personal knowledge and personal love; the writer's knowledge of Jesus, and Jesus' love toward the writer. But one whom Jesus loved must have been pre-eminently good, pious, and tender-hearted. Such, then, is the witness which addresses us in this Scripture. No wonder the Scripture so overflows with spiritual light, truth, and grace. The wonder is rather if any true disciple of Jesus does not, of his own motion, recognise his Lord and Friend in the marvellously-elevated and divinely-benignant words of the book. In its sublime and lustrous pages Jesus acts and speaks more fully, more characteristically, more divinely than in any other part of the New Testament. And then when you turn to the Apostolic band, and, studying their characters severally, endeavour to select the one that could have written this Gospel, you cannot, at least, if your experience is not very different to mine, be satisfied with putting the finger of your choice on any one but John, Zebedee's son.

But who are the *all* in "we all." Here is a number, it may be "a cloud of witnesses." Everything about the testimony we are studying tends to show that it was made at a late date. The "we all" may then be the sign manual of the Church at Ephesus, if John really spent his last days in that city. If not that Church, yet some other Church or Christian community is clearly intended. And such a meaning indicates deliberation, for it involves common action. No hasty judgment, then, have we under our eye; no hasty nor premature verdict, but one the result of organisation, common counsel, and mature consideration.

The appearance of evidence in this emphatic form is in complete union with the declared object of the writer as already pointed out, and serves to evince that I have not mistaken the character of the composition. It is rather an argument than a history. As such, selection of materials was not only natural but inevitable. Not without a solid reason did the writer undertake to add another Gospel to those which already existed—more probably than the three we now possess. What the reason was he has told in his own words. Was his a work of supererogation? If not, then he had something to say in addition to or different from what had already been said. The general character of the Scripture, as it lies under our own eyes, shows us what that something was. Meaning to speak on ocular evidence, he could not, near the end of the first century, report particulars touching the birth, and childhood, and youth of Jesus. He leaves the topic untouched, and opens his narrative with the meeting of John and Jesus. Here he finds his first witness.

Before I speak of him somewhat more, I desire to add a few words regarding John's omissions. He does not report the temptation; he does not adduce the evidence of demonical cures. He had his reasons. The question in all cases was, "Will this specially promote my object?" The temptation once reported called for no repetition. Exorcism had little in it to serve his high spiritual aim, and possessed little evidential force, if only because others, as Josephus tells us, practised exorcism. Moreover, he makes the metropolis the principal theatre of Christ's action. Yes; the Synoptics had dealt with Galilee. Yet, while he avoids ground already trodden, he gives a studied account of the resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection of Christ. The former was demanded by its special and powerful bearing on his general theme, and the latter by the importance of throwing into a concise form its chief particulars, the rather because the accounts of the Synoptics, though in the main agreeing one with another and with the actual facts, differed not a little, and were more or less inexact. He—John shall I say? anyway, the Apostle, the eye-witness, who had had personal acquaintance with all things from the beginning, resolved, therefore, to close his argument with the most signal proof of all, stated in a summary, but clear, consistent, and satisfactory manner.

But is proof the purpose of the writer? Does the writer argue or does he narrate? He both argues and narrates. This is sufficiently clear. But does he argue in order to narrate, or narrate in order to argue? His narratives are arguments from first to last. The book itself is an argument conducted mainly by historical illustrations.

The Gospel was written to establish a fact, namely, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God; and to propound a doctrine,

namely, that faith in him was God's way to lead men to everlasting life. The two propositions combined present Jesus as the Saviour of the world.

Let us put this technical language into a more general form. Jesus is here presented in two aspects. First, he is the Christ. This view is addressed to the Jews. Historically he is the Christ, and as such the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham. If this is established, one of the two great members of the human family is won over to Christianity.

But there is another member, namely, the Gentiles. The Gentiles are familiar with the title Son of God. It is true their associations with it are less correct than impressive. Still they are used to the term, and the term denotes with them the highest honour that can be possessed by beings below the one Supreme. Jesus, then, is the Son of God. And he is the Son of God not in virtue of any imaginary lineal descent, but in consequence of his moral and spiritual resemblance to God.

This important doctrine, which would be understood by the pagans generally, and receive a welcome even by its more cultivated minds, since philosophy had anyway taught the few that the best man is likeliest to God, the writer found in his old Hebrew recollections, for there in the books with which he was familiarised in his childhood and youth, and which he continued to love and study in his age, he read how that when God created the universe he made man in his own image. Godlikeness, then, is man's principal attribute, in the possession of which man becomes not only God's creature, but God's son. The latter title runs through the sacred books, and is ever ascribed, with increase of emphasis and rise of meaning, to the great of the Hebrew commonwealth, until it comes to be the special title of the ideal of the nation, the servant of God, and the deliverer of his people. Thus, the two designations, Messiah and Son of God, came to signify to the Hebrew pretty much the same thing, only that while the former, as being historical, looks down to the earth; the latter, as being moral and spiritual, looks up to heaven. However, the two comprise the highest civil and social dignity, as well as the highest religious excellence. Yet, while the former is official, the latter is individual. Consequently, to be the Son of God is at once the qualification and the right to be the Messiah. Accordingly, Jesus, as the perfect man, was the Son of God, and as the Son of God, he was the Messiah. Herein lay his claim on the Hebrew family. If Jesus was really the Christ, the Son of God, it followed with the sons of Israel that they had life in his name.

The argument which the Evangelist was constructing had less point and force with the pagan, because the pagan literature was far less religious in its essence than that of the Hebrews. And at this point arose the danger which the author desired to put an end to. Already the term "Son of God" had given countenance

to philosophical figments and encouraged polytheistic tendencies. Need, then, was there for a strictly monotheistic presentation of the truth to the Gentile mind. A suitable basis presented itself to the Israelite author in the same sacred books of his nation; for there he read that when God created the heaven and the earth, he performed the task by uttering his will by the channel of his word: "And God said, Let light be, and light was." Nine times is the formula, "God said," made to precede God's creative and administrative acts. It follows that, with the Hebrew, God's word was the same as God in action. But God in action is God in manifestation, and God in manifestation is divine truth in its purest, highest, and most universal form. Hence, to show that Christianity was God's word to man was to establish it, with Gentile no less than Jew, on the broadest and most solid foundation. This the Evangelist accomplishes by showing that Christianity, as the religion of Christ, was God's word to man, inasmuch as Christ himself was the *shekinah*, or dwelling-place, of the Creator of the world, the source of all truth. Already had the Apostle Paul taught the same doctrine, when he declared that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. v., 19). This sublime fact constitutes at once the essence and the evidence of the Gospel. Sad to think that it was ever degenerated by speculation. Already, however, the evil leaven was at work. Philo of Alexandria, wishing to accommodate Mosaicism to Gentile modes of thought, dealt subtly with the same passage whence the Evangelist drew the true and pure light, and—now making the word a metaphor and now an hypostasis—paved the way for its becoming a person, first in the original sense of the term—that is, as a manifestation or an aspect of God—and then, by degrees, as a second God, a being having an individuality of his own, yet in such a way as to be one in some divine category scholastically termed the Godhead. Thus, what was meant to establish to all men and all ages the simple monotheism of Moses and Jesus, as God's revealed will to man, and as such the highest form of religion, led, under worldly influences and logical perversions, to a corruption of Christianity which brings the religion of the Cross down, in its lowest debasement, to the superstition of the Papacy and the despotism of the Inquisition and the Jesuits. The fatal career of metaphorical extravagance, beginning with the impersonation of the Word, ends with making the Eternal One to have a mother, and yet to die on Golgotha. More, far more than of old, then, is it needful to try the spirits, "for many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John iv., 1). Nor do we require any other test than that which the Epistle supplies: "Hereby know ye the spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist" (1 John iv., 2, 3).

Consequently, antichrist more or less rules in Christendom, for Christ's humanity is all but lost from sight in what is called his divinity.

The Scriptural divinity of Christ I acknowledge. With me Jesus is no mere man. Nor is he only the best and greatest of men. He is also the shrine and the organ of God. The combined qualities which he hence possesses make him not solely the light, but the life and the Saviour of the world. It follows, of course, that he is not the Almighty, nor the Absolute One. But, possessing the spirit of the Infinite Father without measure, such as man can mete, he is at once divine and human, no less transcendently than really, and, accordingly, is qualified to mediate between God and man, so as to be the channel of God's mercy and lovingkindness, and the way along which men may be drawn and led to God. Such in substance is the teaching of the fourth Gospel, and in this teaching that Scripture is at one with the teaching of the Synoptics.

The doctrine finds exposition in what is called the proem to the Scripture with which we are now occupied. The proem contains the true doctrine of the *Logos*, or Word. The sum of it is, the Word of God is God himself considered as in manifestation. This Word, *which is God*, took up his abode in the man Jesus, who, in consequence, became the Son of God. The view is founded on the Biblical relation of God to the universe, and specially to man, as recorded in Genesis. There God speaks all things into being, and breathing into man his own spirit makes him his son by creating him in his own image. Here is the typical man. This ideal was reached by Jesus of Nazareth. Reached by him, it may be reached by other men, and must be possessed and enjoyed by every son and daughter of Adam when God is "all in all" (1 Cor. xv., 28). Thus, it appears that the doctrine taught in the proem is the doctrine of the Bible. It is found on its first page; it is repeated again and again, and it lies as a realised fact at the end of the vista which the Apostle Paul opens before man's aspiring faith.

Before I speak of the doctrine a little in detail, let us look at it as it is enunciated in the proem. The following propositions present themselves there:—

1. The Word was in the beginning.
2. The Word was with God.
3. The Word was God.

Number one declares that the Word existed from all eternity. Number two that the Word was shared by God. Number three that the Word was God himself. Number one is explained and justified by the fact that as a man's word is co-existent with himself, being nothing else than his intelligence in one view and the utterance of that intelligence in another, so God, being ever wise and ever creative, possessed his Word from all eternity, so

that God and God's Word are only two aspects of the same divine and everlasting reality. This idea of possessing, or the differential element as between God and his Word, is declared expressly in number two, where the eternal Word is described as with or in the eternal God. Yet, lest anyone should be hence led to think that the difference was more than formal, number three states that the Word was God.

The doctrine thus taught, and which finds its original in Genesis, finds its explanation in analogy, as I have tacitly intimated. The analogy is man in his relation to his word. Man and man's word are the same in two different aspects. What is a man's word but his uttered will, that is, himself in utterance? That will is conceived of as having an independent existence, and man is conceived of as being independent of his will, in the simple form of speech, *man's will*. Yet, no one supposes two persons, or two beings, or two anything are meant; but we all know, from our own consciousness, that a man and his will are identical in reality, though dissimilar in representation. As with man, so with God. Of course, the analogy is imperfect, and language itself fails to describe the reality with exactness and fulness. Yet, what words will not say we may each say to ourselves when we look within, and, seeing ourselves, see also a faint yet reliable image of God.

But in vain shall we expect to see in that mirror, any more than in the sacred text, the dogma of the creeds. My word may be a kind of second self, but certainly is not another person, still less one of three persons, each a human being, and all united in some totality, which totality does not contain more than either one of its constituent elements, so that my word is as much as my word, my spirit, and myself in combination. Were this really true, then either the four could be only diverse views of a common reality, or my spirit and myself, as well as the totality, would be so many superfluities.

Not to dwell on this and a hundred other insuperable objections to the ordinary doctrine of the Trinity, I must observe that the common view in the first place robs man of God. For *what* does it say became flesh? What? The second person? that is, one-third of Deity. The Son? that is, God without the Father and the Holy Ghost. And yet the Father is declared by the Son to be not only greater than himself (John xiv., 28), but "greater than all" (John x., 29). God apart from the Father is no God at all. But the very use of these terms of comparison ought to satisfy everyone that in speaking of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Scripture deals not with absolutes or the absolute, but simply with relative qualities or functions. The assertion that one who is God is greater, and another less than a third, is either nonsense or tritheism.

But in the second place, the Evangelist, while declaring the

Word that became flesh to be God, never once calls Jesus the Word. This fact ought to suffice to disprove the common doctrine. If with him the Word meant the second person in the Trinity, and if Jesus was the second person in the Trinity in the view of the writer, he could not have failed to denominate Jesus the Word, any more than they fail now, or from the first have failed, who use these as interchangeable terms. How thoroughly Scripture is free from the *Logos* doctrine of the Schools appears from the circumstance that not one clear instance can be adduced from the Bible in which Jesus is called the Word in the dogmatical and metaphysical sense of the term. This is the more remarkable (showing how specially rigid the Scriptural authorities were to guard the simplicity of doctrine from human corruptions) because Jesus, considered as revealing God in his own words and deeds, may, in a general sense, be called the Word of God.

One great and fundamental advantage that accrues from the correct view of this important point is that man's relations with God in Jesus Christ are left in this proem the same as they are described in the Bible at large, and as they are recognised in our own individual consciousness and experience. God himself communicates with man through his Spirit after the manner of the life of Jesus, his Son, and his Christ. With no inferior Being whatever, be he second or third, is the Christian connected in his ultimate relations. The trust of all the Old Testament worthies is his trust, for to him Jehovah is "the rock ; his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment ; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deut. xxxii., 4). Nay, the God of Jesus himself is his God, Jesus himself being the voucher. "I am not yet ascended to my Father ; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (John xx., 17). The disciple of Christ, who trusts in the God of the Bible and in the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, stands on a foundation than which none can be more solid and safe.

The two facts—Jesus by birth was a man, and Jesus was filled and led by the Spirit of God—are the pivots on which turns the doctrine taught in our Gospel touching God and Christ.

The word flesh declares the human nature of Jesus in a marked and even bold manner. The *Evangelist* was not ashamed of a crucified Christ. John the Baptist declares "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world" (i., 30) a man in these explicit terms : "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a *man* which is got before me, for he is my superior" (i., 30). Nicodemus speaks of Jesus as a man who was a teacher : "We know that thou art a *teacher come from God*; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him" (iii., 2). Jesus designates himself man : "A *man* that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God" (viii., 40 ; xv., 24) ; and Son of Man

(i., 51; iii., 13, 14; v., 27; vi., 27, 53, 62; viii., 28; xii., 23; xiii., 31). "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon *the Son of Man*"—words which denote the constant fellowship of Jesus with his Heavenly Father during his ministry. He also calls his disciples his *brethren* (John xx., 17). Moreover, the Evangelist makes Nathaniel describe Jesus as the Son of Joseph: "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, *the Son of Joseph*" (i., 45).

These instances occur in the Gospel which is said to have been written to supplement the Synoptical Gospels by studiously setting forth Christ's Deity, and which certainly do give very lofty (nor less true) ideas of his relations to God. Indeed, our Lord's humanity is no less necessary to his office than his divinity. But orthodoxy safeguards neither the one nor the other. In the Creeds, Christ is properly neither God nor man, but a spurious compound of the two. The fourth Gospel, however, makes him a son of man by nature, and the Son of God by pre-ordination, qualification, and delegation. In so doing it presents a fundamental point of agreement with the Synoptics. The miraculous conception may be pleaded in reply. But what have we in that except the faith of the Church, to the effect that the man who rose so high in the divine life must have brought into the world with him more of the divine element than falls to the lot of ordinary human beings?

THE ARGUMENT EXHIBITED.

Having thus cleared the way, I shall concisely present the Evangelist's argument in several of its steps.

1. *The Origin of Christ and Christianity is in God*, and consequently must be divinely true. Jesus is the embodiment of God, and, as such, the highest and best visible expression of God. But while Jesus is thus divine in his endowments, he is also human in his birth. Indeed, he shares the weaknesses of our nature in order that by his strength he may make men strong. It follows that the Gospel is humanly, no less than divinely, true. The two facts are represented by the terms the Son of God and the Son of Man, in the union of which Jesus becomes on his Hebrew side the Messiah, and in his highest and most comprehensive relations the Saviour of the World. Yet, while he stands thus high in God's sight and in man's, he never ceases to be dependent on God, who is to him the source and the support of all he has, says, does. This dependence, which is utterly incompatible with his being God in reality and man only in form, is most variously declared and set forth throughout the Gospel. The evidence is the more forcible and the more acceptable because its underlying doctrine stands in complete harmony with man's relation to his Heavenly Father, and gives him an assurance

of gradually ascending from his present low estate to a resemblance to his Saviour—that is, in other words, to rise in the spiritual order continually until he becomes one with the Father and the Son. The great lever for this ascension is the continual presence and operation in his soul of God's Holy Spirit, as manifested in Christ. Christianity, then, is no mere morality, but a religion—or rather it is *the* religion, the purest, most elevated, most quickening, most hallowing of all God's powers and influences in his human family. Thus fully, strikingly, and everlastingly does God bear witness of himself, not only in the fourth Gospel, but in its principal personage, "the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And thus may we know that the witness is true; for it testifies that divine wisdom, love, and power tabernacled among men in the Messiah, the Son of God.

2. Having laid this solid foundation, the Evangelist next adduces the testimony of the greatest and last of the prophets, a contemporary of Jesus and a martyr to his fidelity in serving God, The substance of *the Baptist's evidence*, which would be of special value with men of Hebrew blood, is in effect that Jesus is the impersonation of divine tenderness, because the recipient of the divine spirit—in a word, "the Lamb of God," "the Son of God."

In our common version, and in copies of the original, John's words are confounded with the words of others so as seriously to obscure the sense. The proper arrangement is seen in what ensues (i., 15-34):—

Evangelist. John testifies, &c.

John. This is he of whom I spake.

Evangelist. And we have all received, &c.

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests, &c.

Priests. Who art thou?

John. I am not the Messiah, but the voice, &c.

Evangelist. And they who were sent were Pharisees, and they asked him, Why dost thou baptise?

John. To introduce my superior, who shall baptise not with water like me, but with the holy spirit and with fire (Matt. iii., 11).

Evangelist. These things were done in Bethania, &c.

The next day John seeth Jesus, and saith:

John. Behold the Lamb of God, &c.

Evangelist. And John testified, saying:

John. I saw the spirit of God descending from heaven, &c.
This is the Son of God.

Here are four separate testimonies to Jesus made by his fore-runner, John the Baptist, and made so publicly as to call and receive attention from the Sanhedrim.

Another testimony is given by the Baptist in John iii., 23-30, the principal point of which is expressed in these terms: "He

must increase, I must decrease." A tone so unselfish, so self-renunciatory, so modest, so acquiescent in the divine arrangements, places John in a high position in the scale of the spiritual life, and makes the value of the witness he bears to Christ alike great and satisfactory. Did any one of the great ones of earth ever sink below the horizon, and hail the rising sun in a spirit so contented and dignified? God's great ones are truly great.

The important passage which follows, from iii., 31, to iii., 36, appears to be a confirmatory illustration of the Baptist's testimony from the pen of the Evangelist. Directing attention to the emphasis in which it puts forward testimony, and testimony of the best kind—"what he (Jesus) hath seen and heard,"—I transcribe, for a few words of comment, these words: "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for not partially does God give him the spirit. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." The statements, while representing the general tenor of the Gospel, are incompatible with the ordinary doctrine of the *Logos*. The Son, it seems, is the envoy of God, not the second person of the Trinity. As an envoy, he is sent of God; and as sent of God, he is personally separate from and dependent on God. As, however, being God's envoy, and so not God himself, he speaks the words of God. The reason assigned is that he has God's Spirit, whereas the *Logos* doctrine is that Christ was a person in the Godhead. But every good man has God's Spirit, and after his measure speaks the words of God. How, then, does *the* Son differ from other sons? By his being "the *Logos*?" No! By his being "God the Son?" This is not said. What, then, is said? This: "for not partially (or by measure) does God give him the Spirit." First, notice the present tense, denoting an eye-witness and a continued action. Then notice the word *for*. We have here a reason why Jesus speaks the words of God. It is because God gives him the Spirit. Consequently, Christ does not possess the Spirit of himself. It is a gift—a gift from God. But Jesus, if the *Logos*, had the words of God abiding in him; they were intrinsic and inherent; they were in the essence of his being. A greater contradiction cannot easily be imagined than that between the Evangelist's view of Christ's relation to God and that which the *Logos* doctrine involves. Clearly our author knew nothing of that doctrine. At all events, he expounds a doctrine which, by excluding, denies it. Finally, notice the term "partially," or "by measure." The distinction of Jesus is that he has the spirit of God without measure, that is, without such measures as man can apply. Perhaps our term indefinitely, least imperfectly, describes the Evangelist's meaning. Anyway, it is a question of degree. Jesus has the Spirit of God in the highest possible degree, and therefore does he speak the word of God. If this is put into plain English it may stand thus: Jesus has the Spirit

of God by the gift of God, and he has it in a measure beyond any limit that ordinary experience can define.

And here we have a solution of the enigma involved in the relation borne of God to Jesus. It was a spiritual relation of the loftiest and richest kind. In other words, Jesus, by the grace of God, became one with God so much as to speak the words of God. Yet the highest possible gift implies a limit. Possible in what way, or under what conditions? The answer is at hand. Jesus calls himself "the Son of Man." The highest then possible to one who was "born of a woman, and born under the law." To be born under the law was to be born of the most religious of all people. To be born of a woman denotes man in his loftiest and tenderest capacities. The two combined are tantamount to a man of the highest human possibilities. All that man can be, Jesus had the power of being, and was. And by man we mean not an individual, but the race. Select and put together in one the several gifts and graces of all the best men in history and at the present hour, and then you have a measure of human possibility, and a representation of what Jesus was. The image thus formed you may look at under two aspects: first, without God's Spirit. So regard it, and you feel that those possibilities are no longer possible, and can never become realities. Then regard it as impregnated with the Spirit of God. This element of perfection makes all those excellences first possible in your thought, and secondly apprehensible in your intelligence, when set forth as an historical reality in Jesus of Nazareth.

This appears to have been the psychology of the Evangelist. The view is in perfect keeping with our own individual experiences, and so is borne out as analogous. What, then, is Jesus? What but the transcendently perfect man, and, as such, the Son of God.

An ultimate ground of the relationship thus implied between the God and Christ is assigned in the context: "The Father loveth the Son, and (loving him) hath given all things into his hands." The ground is one not of nature and essence, but of affection and complacency. What is this but a contradiction of the *Logos* doctrine; and what, again, is this but the doctrine of the Synoptics, conveyed almost in their own terms: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii., 17; Mark i., 11); "This is my beloved Son; hear him" (Luke ix., 35; Acts iii., 22). If, then, words have meaning, the bond between the Father and the Son is of an ethical nature. The Father loves the Son, because in the Son he sees his own moral perfections honoured and reflected. Indeed, but for the scales put upon their eyes by speculation, men would find in the epithets Father and Son an indication of the same moral and spiritual bond.

3. Then follows *the testimony of two of the Baptist's disciples*, who, on hearing their master pronounce Jesus the Lamb of God,

follow him. One of these is Andrew, Peter's brother, who also accepts and follows the great teacher. Then Jesus, going into Galilee, converts Philip and Nathaniel (i., 36-51).

One small incident here shows how much the evidential aim of the Evangelist surpasses and covers the historical. It is this, that while the conversions are given in some detail, the scene is changed from the south to the north of the country by this concise statement: "Jesus resolved to go hence into Galilee" (43). The termination of our Lord's conversation declares to Nathaniel: "Thou wilt see greater things than these—namely, the angels (in spiritual communion) ascending and descending on the Son of Man;" thus indicating a continual rise in the degree of God's inspiration in, and communion with, his servant and son. The indication is forthwith fulfilled in—

4. *The miracle at the nuptial feast in Cana.* The deed is an anticipation of the display of power on the part of Jesus in order to comply with a request made by Mary his mother, who was present. Dictated by a pure and filial motive, the act conducted to the enhancement of innocent festivities, and so presents Jesus to all posterity as not an ascetic, like the Baptist, but a tender-hearted son and a kindly-sympathising man. He, then, is "the man of men." His geniality makes himself appear lovely, and throws over his religion a beam of light equally sacred and attractive. The same beautiful trait in his character is described by the Synoptics thus: "The Son of Man came eating and drinking" (Matt. xi., 19; Luke vii., 34). No wonder the Evangelist speaks of this act as displaying Christ's glory, and as conducing to build up his disciples in faith. What a contrast with the ascetic Essenes, the severe and rigorous Baptist, the haughty, supercilious, and distant Pharisees, the sceptical, fastidious, and scornful Sadducees! Apply here our criterion of the divine. Is anything more divine, as well as more human, than the considerate love and sympathy which this son of Mary, and this brother of us all, manifests here? The greatest of ordinary men are the most genial, and the most genial of men are the least unlike the tender Father of our race, who supplieth "wine that maketh glad the heart of man, oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart" (Ps. civ., 15).

The religious cheerfulness which this miracle represents and encourages is apt to be misunderstood in a day when, like the present, some of the most benevolent of men are naturally eager to put a stop to the—alas! how prevalent—vice of intoxication, the prolific parent of the direst evils. Hence, on the part of many, a distaste by which they are disabled for recognising the essential truth and beauty of the narrative. Yet a temporary sentiment, however pure and praiseworthy under special circumstances, must not be allowed to transmute into "wood, hay, or stubble" one of the brilliants of the New Testament.

Jesus having, in company with his mother, brethren, and disciples, gone from Cana to Capernaum, leaves Galilee after a few days and goes to Jerusalem, at the time of the Passover, anxious to seize so favourable an opportunity for manifesting his glory, which was the glory of God. And thus he is led to another display of his divine authority and power by

5. *Driving the traffickers out of the Temple* (ii., 12-25). The illustration is effected by this word, "Take these things away hence; make not the house of my Father a house of traffic."

He spake and was obeyed, because he possessed the Spirit of him who said:—"Let light be, and light was." His moral indignation smote to the heart those profaners of the House of God, and they fled bearing their merchandise with them. The majestic deed ran through the huckstering and guilt-stained metropolis, making converts as it went, everywhere kindling up the conviction, "only the Messiah could thus be zealous for God, and thus overpower and disperse those worshippers of mammon." How needful now a similar display of divine displeasure, when Simonists swarm in the Church as the lice in Egypt, and defile its meat and drink like the harpies in Virgil. Nor could a similar outpouring of intrinsic moral authority fail to be followed by similar increase of faith, when it was seen and felt that Christianity could blast vice as well as make virtue blossom and bear fruit like the apple-tree of the wood (Cant. ii., 3), and doubtless the day of the Lord will come. Meanwhile I commend to those traffickers in divine things this word of the Master:—"Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder" (Matt. xxi., 44).

With characteristic outwardness the Jewish spectators demand a sign of Christ's authority for acting thus. As if the deed were not sign enough in itself. The cavilling, however, called forth from Jesus a word which is rooted too deeply down in the Evangelical history, and is in itself too Christ-like not to be genuine:—"Destroy this temple (his body), and I will raise it in three days." The word went like an arrow into the minds of the objectors. There it remained. They pondered it, and produced it when they thought it would answer their purpose. Interpreted Hebraically it was blasphemy. Accordingly, it was pleaded against Jesus when on his trial (Matt. xxvi., 61; xxvii., 40; Mark xiv., 58; xv., 29).

In this, then, we possess a speech of Christ which is unquestionably genuine. What does it contain? Jesus, surrounded by enemies, displays great moral courage and boldness, so as to defy their evil designs. Moreover, he foresees his death, and foretells his resurrection. This is all consonant with what we know of his character and bearing from the Synoptics. The words also report the cleansing of the Temple. In point of date, however, John differs from the Synoptics; for, while he places it early in his

Master's ministry, they place it late. The difference may have arisen from the aims of the two being dissimilar. In the arrangement of their materials, the latter more or less follow the order of time, the former the order of argumentative force.

The bearing of this word, on the fact of his rising again, is not unimportant. The prediction is part of an undoubtedly genuine utterance. The two cannot be separated. It follows that Christ did predict his rising again, and as in fact he did rise again the event confirmed the prediction, and so evidenced the lofty position Jesus held in the spiritual world, and in the providence of God. The prediction, however, was not understood by his disciples. No wonder, for they could not believe that he was to die. This was the padlock which held their eyes closed to the true nature of their Master's mission. However, what words the clearest leave unaccomplished is often accomplished by events. "Therefore when he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken" (22).

Our sight is so dimmed by constant use in reading the Scripture, that we often pass important points unnoticed. I have just given an instance of our Lord's moral boldness. Another occurs in the words, "My Father's house." What? That Nazarene peasant call the Temple his Father's house? How astounded were the greybeards that stood around and looked on the profane traffic with eyes that saw not, and heard the bellowing of the oxen with ears that heard not. The astonishment gave way to vexation when they suddenly observed the whole troop of men and beasts hurrying out of the sacred place.

Yes, that house was his Father's—the Father of him who could speak so as to be thus obeyed. As if to show that it was an argument he was conducting, the writer ends his narrative by reporting the success which followed the words and deeds of Jesus.

The cause of God is rapidly making progress in the guilty city, awakening the slumberers as well as confounding the hypocrites. A specimen of the former kind creeps forth by night, ashamed of being seen approaching Jesus by day. This is one of the respectabilities of Jerusalem. Moreover, he is one of its reasoners. Yes, Jesus must be the Messiah, for does he not work miracles? He will go and see and hear for himself, who knows but "a ruler of the Jews" may be acceptable to this Jesus who is said to be followed by only a few Galilean peasants.

6. *In Nicodemus head religion is disallowed in favour of heart religion* (iii., 1 seq.). There is no need of transcribing the conversation. The doctrine taught is that in evidence men must not stop at the outward, and that the sole, true, and sufficient proof in religion is the great and thorough internal change of heart, the precursor of a corresponding change of life, which is wrought by the

Spirit of God acting, after its own manner, in unison with the will of the individual. The secondary place here assigned to miracles finds its counterpart in the Synoptics where Jesus requires, as a necessary preliminary, that faith or spiritual union with himself which is the eye of the soul (Matt. xiii., 58 ; xvii., 20 ; Mark vi., 6 ; ix., 24 ; xvi., 14 ; John xi., 40). This is a marked peculiarity in the teachings of Jesus, and it distinguishes his miraculous action from that of all the thaumaturgs or wonderworkers in the world. Indeed, it makes imposture impossible, since the power to work miracles implies the pre-existence, in the case of the recipients as well as the agent, of a pure, moral, and developed spiritual sense. Thus regarded the miracles of Christ bear their attestation in their own character. They are divine, for they come from a divine source, wear divine features, and perform a divine work. Beelzebub has no part nor lot in this sacred matter. True religion is here described as a new birth. The idea may be found among the philosophers. Indeed, it is intrinsic in all high culture, which being a very decided result of self-discipline can be truly described only by calling it a *palingenesia*, or new birth. Here, again, the doctrine of Jesus verifies itself. Beyond a doubt his is the highest style of religion, because purifying, sweetening, and invigorating the sources of man's life, it sanctifies and ennobles his character, putting him into possession of the life which, resembling the life of Christ and God, can never die (John vi., 50 ; viii., 51 ; x., 21 ; xi., 26).

While Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus would, by exhibiting the superiority of the former over the latter, contribute to the convincing of the Jews, the pagans, so far as they really desired instruction in true religion, could not fail to be conciliated by the new teacher's doctrine, which at once recalled and surpassed the best of what they had found in their native philosophy.

The superiority is distinctly asserted by Jesus, while indicating the inaptitude of Nicodemus for spiritual truth, which was such as to deprive Christ's testimony of its due effect, and to leave himself in the half light, half darkness in which he had been born. Here is our Lord's way of treating the question. "How?" Nicodemus asks: "How can these things be?" *How?* You must have your eyes couched. Spiritual realities are seen only by spiritual vision. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, thou must be born again. Then thou wilt cease to ask, "How?" being like myself and my true disciples, for we speak not from history, or by repetition, but that we do know and testify that we have seen ; and the reason I thus speak of my own authority is, that I and I only am in ceaseless communion with my Father, for "no man hath (like Moses going into the Mount) ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is (even now) in heaven."

The mention of Moses recalls to the mind of Jesus the uplifted serpent in the wilderness—a fit image of himself as ere long to

be lifted up on the cross. Accordingly, he proceeds again to foretell his death, and adds that its object and result will be eternal life to all that believe in himself. Pursuing the subject, he utters the grandest of all facts: "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; for God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved," adding that the condemnation lies in the refusal of so transcendent a gift. Than that refusal what privation so severe, what loss so great? While to accept the offer is followed by "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

These are wondrously great realities. So great and so peculiar are they as to be their own evidence and their own recommendation. "Truly never man spake like" "the Son of man" (13). Ordinary men long for this good, and shrink from this evil, and can neither of themselves gain it nor give it. The philosophers know not how to soar on so firm and steady a pinion, nor dare they venture into regions so elevated. If poetry is sometimes clad in rainbow hues, the hues are unreliable and evanescent. Only one in all history ever spake so divinely. In consequence, he attracts all eyes and wins all hearts. Here is the true philosophy, the genuine ideal, the everlasting reality, the one universal religion. Here is what man wants, and what only God can give.

Again, we find argument accompanied by conviction and assurance as the result of the eclectic method of publishing the glad tidings pursued by the Evangelist.

7. *The universalism of Jesus in contrast with the localism of the Samaritans* (iv.). The chain of argumentative exposition brings us to the finest thought in the literature of the world, the Bible included. God is Spirit. The utterance is, perhaps, even more important than that other coming from the same pen: "God is Love," because it is a more effectual hindrance to that materialism in religion to which philosophic, hardly less than vulgar minds, have ever been prone in certain stages of culture (unculture). The two put together, especially when, as in Scripture, love is expounded by the parental affection—the love of a father and the love of a mother—present the purest, loftiest, and most engaging representation of the Deity that the mind can conceive, or the heart desire. "God is Love," "God is Spirit,"—that is, God is spiritual love or loving Spirit—form a creed which makes all other creeds unnecessary, while it throws them into deepest shade. Strange that with such an utterance churchmen should ever have left this well of life, and gone in search of broken fountains that can hold no water. There are thoughts which immortalise their utterer. But if ever thought had a right to do so, it is the one before us. If all expressions touching God were lost to civilisation excepting this, it would suffice for the kernel of a new religion and for re-invigorating the mind of man and the heart of society.

And yet this grand, simple, and comprehensive utterance is ascribed to some Gnostic dreamer of a date not far from the end of the second century. It is, however, only the substance of the religion of Moses, of the prophets, and of Jesus, condensed into an aphorism. In consequence, it is essentially and exclusively Hebraic. And it is Hebraic of the purest water. Whence could it come but from the circle which environed the imperial prince of monotheists, and the theocratic viceroy of the Old and New Testament? If this word is not from the heart of Christ, and the pen of his beloved disciple, moral and literary qualities have lost their spiritual diagnosis.

God is Spirit—not a Spirit as it is in the authorised version, misled here by its principal authority, Luther's translation. The meaning is not that God is one Spirit among three or several, but that his substance is Spirit. God is Spirit, in the sense that Spirit constitutes God, and God consists of Spirit. The form of the Greek original is similar to that which is Englished in the proem by the sentence, "The Word was God," that is, God in essence.

The utterance is itself a revelation. It makes God in his essence known to man, so far as the absolute can be known to the relative. For man also is spirit; the definition, as is usual, being taken from the highest quality of the subject. God, then, is on the scale of the infinite what man is on the scale of the finite. It follows that in order to obtain a true and reliable idea of God, man needs only to look within. Man's spirit is God's Spirit in miniature. The father is seen in the child. Now that child is both the seer and the seen. Man is at once the subject and the object. Such is God. The Being of beings, in ultimate analysis, is self contemplating self; self loving self; self manifesting self. The first self is the subject; the second self is the object. These twain are one in reality, and two only in conception. The universe, then, is a manifestation of God and man's spirit, the clearest and least inexact mirror of the Creator. The view thus presented, involving as it does a loving will, is far preferable to any inert substance God, such as Spinoza's, and incomparably superior to Renan's God—"our Father the abyss." The view, as the ultimate and crowning thought of the Bible, finds in the Bible, whose imagery it moulded, constant and impressive illustration. Accordingly, while God produces, He also fills the universe, and all its phenomena are simply his thoughts, volitions, and acts.

Thus given and thus illustrated by the Bible, and thus too reflected from our own inner man, God as Spirit lies open (so to say) to every human eye, and so is apprehended by all God's human family.

If, however, God is Spirit, God is one, for Spirit is one. Such is the declaration of our own consciousness, which knows nothing whatever of duality or complexity.

As God is one, and each individual man is one, so are all men

equal, for everyone possesses the qualities that are possessed by every other.

In consequence, worship is an individual act of the inner man ; or, in other words, it is a state of mind in which the oneness common to God and man is most fully realised. Individualism, then, is an essential element in all true religion. If so, then priesthoods, liturgies, ritualisms, and state churches are foreign to religion. If foreign to religion, they are hindrances to it, and ought to be removed out of the way. True religion is the spirit of man immediately communing with the Spirit of God.

Accordingly, Jesus, when he had declared "God is Spirit," adds, "the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth," that is, truly in spirit, apart from all ceremonies, and all external aids, and all distinctions whatever. The common Father accepts the common homage of all the families of the human race. If only the offering is an offering of the heart, the worship of the Hindoo, of the Parsee, of the Moslem is no less acceptable to him than the worship of the Christian, and, among Christians, church, denomination, sect stand for nothing, nor are they even tolerated except so far as they adapt the common worship to the specialities of race, climate, nationality. The moment, however, those worships begin to sink the universal in the particular, they cease to be religion, and become superstition or bigotry.

This grand comprehensiveness of true religion is found only, not so much in what is called Christianity, as in what is really the religion of Christ ; and the cosmopolitan spirit of Christ's own religion is exemplified and illustrated in the admirable manner in which he settled the old and angry controversy which made the Samaritan an object of aversion to the Jew, and the Jew an object of aversion to the Samaritan. Both of one blood, each a member of the Mosaic Church, they could not agree to worship God on the same spot ; but one cried out, "Moriah and not Ebal !" and the other, "Ebal and not Moriah !" and at that cry grew infuriated against each other ; resembling sectaries in these days, who cannot be consigned to their common earth except this one by Catholic hands, that one by Anglican, and that other by Nonconformist ; nor rest at peace in their graves, awaiting the common resurrection unto the same æonian life, unless they lie at a distance one from the other, the separation being effected and guarded by different forms of consecration, and by mounds of earth and walls of stone. And is this possible eighteen hundred years after their common Master had condemned such narrowness in principle, no less than in an individual case ? It is not so much possible as actual. Witness those public cemeteries, which are a dark blot on the Christianity of the day, even in the special accommodation which they make to meet and satisfy the hatred of the sects by a chapel for the Catholics, a chapel for the Anglicans, and a chapel for the Nonconformists. Thus does our mutual bitterness mark

and perpetuate itself in our grave-yards before the eye of the world.

In order to apply to Jesus a decisive test as to whether or not he was the Messiah, the Samaritan woman puts to him the problem of Palestine at that time of day: "Where ought men to worship—on Moriah or on Ebal?" "On neither exclusively, or rather on both, and as on both so everywhere," was the astounding answer of Jesus. God, who is Spirit, can be worshipped on every spot of the wide earth by spiritual worshippers,—by all others nowhere, for spirituality is the essential element of all true worship. Worship, then, does not stand in the bent knee, nor the bowed head, nor the prostrate body, nor the disfigured face, nor in long prayers, nor short prayers, nor in the steeple-house, nor in a barn, nor the hill-side,—but in a devout and grateful state of mind, the fruit of self-knowledge, and the simple acknowledgment of dependence, love, and trust on the part of the worshippers, and of the all-sufficiency of the merciful, loving, and almighty Father. This is true and acceptable worship. And this one idea would, if truly accepted and duly honoured, convert this globe from a hell into a paradise. Thank God for Christ; thank God for Christ. How long, O Lord? how long ere thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?

Meanwhile, every passing day is adding a fresh illustration of these true and momentous, yet, alas! much neglected words, spoken by Jesus on the same occasion:—

"Whosoever drinketh of this water will thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water which I will give him will never thirst again; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (14).

To whom, then, are we indebted for these grand and ever-enduring verities? Undoubtedly to Jesus of Nazareth. There are not in history two Christs. But, if even you denied they came from Jesus, you would only impose on yourself the impossible task of inventing another Christ, equal to the formation and utterance of these sublime thoughts. Moreover, your Christ must have lived in the age of the first Cæsars, and been a native of Nazareth in Galilee, a province of Judea.

But who is the medium of transmission? The Church for seventeen hundred years answered, "The Apostle John." And certainly he must have been an Israelite; he must also have been an eye-witness. Such is the averment of this simple, yet marvellous composition which now lies under our eyes. It is a landscape—a picture true in the minutest detail, as well as in general effect, to the original as it stood before the eye, somewhere in the first third of the first century, in the land of Judea. As such it could not have been invented, imagined, or recollected by a Gnostic speculator in Asia Minor in the middle of the second

century. No! It is a picture painted on the spot, and painted with equal simplicity, truth, and beauty. The several characters—Jesus, his disciples, the Samaritan woman; the natural objects—"Jacob's well," "this mountain," "the fields white unto harvest;" the movements of the scene—every particular, minute as some are, bespeaks the eye and the hand of a spectator, a spectator who was a Jew, and a companion of Jesus. Who could he be, if not the Apostle John?

Advisedly do I abstain from a positive averment, lest, while scholars doubt and debate, I should appear to be guilty of the dogmatism which I deprecate in others; but, I may add, that the more I study this Gospel and that Epistle, in the light of the age when they were produced, as well as in the light of modern criticism, the more I feel myself drawn toward the conclusion that we owe them certainly to an immediate follower of Jesus, and, most probably, to John, the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Whether this inclination is justified or not, we undoubtedly do possess in this Gospel, nor least in this superb chapter, a witness given of God to himself in his Son Jesus Christ.

Equally does the chapter illustrate the general fact, that the writer intended an argument rather than a biography. Accordingly, while here, too, Jesus, in his divine wisdom and human sympathy, evidences at once his mission and his doctrine; that evidence proved very effectual in the instance before us. Witness the confession of the Samaritans, made after Jesus had stayed among them two days,—“No longer do we believe on account of thy (the woman's) word, for we ourselves have heard him, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the World, the Christ.”

Yes; there *is* genuine faith—the assurance of the individual who knows that Jesus is the Saviour, not because he is told so from the pulpit, but because he has himself heard and seen the Lord. The hearing and the seeing are now both spiritual. Nevertheless, spiritual experiences are the highest, and whatever the outer eye and the outer ear did for those Samaritans, it was of small service, except as conducive to the hearing of the inner ear, and the seeing of the inner eye. And food for both abound on all sides in our Christian religion and our Christian civilisation, for the Church, with all its defects and abuses, is not the tomb, but the home of the Lord Jesus, who, by his spirit, dwells in the heart and shines forth in the life of every faithful disciple. Only be sure that you look for him, not in hierarchies, but in individuals.

VIII. *Jesus heals an officer belonging to the household of Herod Antipas* (iv., 43-54). Having manifested his high moral tone and superlative spiritual wisdom toward the schismatical and heretical outcasts of Samaria, Jesus passes out of Samaria into Galilee, and, resting at Cana, where he wrought his first miracle, is urged by a courtier to proceed to Capernaum, at no great distance on the

Lake of Galilee, in order to heal his son, who lies at the point of death. Having, as in the Synoptics, reproved the desire for signs and wonders as means of faith, Jesus, by the sole exercise of his will, restores the youth to health; thus gratifying the father, while admonishing him not to rest in the external. The deed bears in bold relief an impress of the Christ of the first three Gospels, namely, intense human sympathy and surpassing divine power. In this incident we find a step upwards in the exercise of our Lord's authority. He works the miracle, while absent from him who received the benefit. "How?" some one will ask. I know not; nor do I know how health becomes sickness, and sickness is restored to health. Equally am I ignorant of the process by which certain mineral or chemical forces pass into now a turnip, now an apple, and now a peach. Nor less nor more am I ignorant how the electric wire transmits my thoughts to the antipodes.

The account given is full of particulars, and so wears the air of a simple reality.

One effect of the benevolent deed was the conversion of the officer and his whole family. Another, in all probability, was not only an augmentation of Christ's influence in general, but a favourable impression in Herod's court. The latter, which was of great consequence to Jesus, since Antipas was his (so to say) feudal lord, may have been that at which Jesus principally aimed. Anyway, the whole transaction is an argument, and a successful argument.

Renan, without any sanction but his own theory, maintains that the miraculous in the Gospels partly grew up insensibly, and partly was got up by Jesus and his disciples. The reproof uttered by Jesus in this matter shows that both the alleged insensibility and the alleged complicity are "idle tales." Jesus wrought miracles with his eyes open, yet withstood all eager desire for them, while in regard to evidence he places them in a secondary position. That John's narrative consists of selections from the history of Jesus is made manifest as we proceed, and here specially by the statement that Jesus owed the welcome he received from the Galileans to their having seen *all* that he did at the festival of the Passover (45). Yet what does the Evangelist put down to the account of Jesus while he was in Jerusalem? One incident—the lustration of the Temple.

IX. *Jesus, by healing the Bethesda paralytic, appeals to the Jerusalemites* (v). Having wrought two miracles in Galilee, both at the request of others, and both for benevolent purposes, Jesus goes up to Jerusalem, and, coming upon a man who had suffered from paralysis during thirty years, heals him as he lies on the verge of the Pool of Bethesda, hoping that some good soul would put him into the water when agitated by the salutiferous gas. One sentence from the lips of Jesus effects a cure.

That sentence is: "Rise, take up thy couch and walk!" (Matt.

ix., 6.) Of course, Renan denies the word was ever uttered. But let him say what more appropriate word could have been spoken, had the whole scene been real. The word is one of those imperial phrases which none but great souls can utter, and which denote and describe the great souls from which they come.

Yet, while the speaker speaks as sublimely as he acts, the entire event is marked by the utmost calmness and simplicity.

The appeal thus made to the best sentiments of the Jerusalemites is encountered by supercilious cavilling on the part of the Jews, which ends in such malevolence as to drive them to seek his destruction. With the utmost self-possession, Jesus meets the assault. In maintaining his cause, he takes up the loftiest position. The Synoptics make him, when charged with breaking the Sabbath, plead that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. Here, however, Jesus puts forwards the example of God. "My Father ever worketh" the seventh day no less than the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth He hallows by the exercise of his ceaseless wisdom and benevolence. Taught, as I am of him, I also work as He does.

The answer is irrefutable. In view of the fact that Jesus possessed God's Spirit without measure, the answer is perfectly natural, nor less is it sublime.

Look into the mind where such an answer came into existence, and describe its grandeur if you can. Yet these words, like all the other grand verities recorded in the Gospel, proceeded from one who was no more inspired of God than Seneca or Shakespere, and who was engaged in a religious enterprise, which, like all religious enterprises, involved much that was unreal, no little that was false, and somewhat of delusion and deception? If such was the self-consciousness of Jesus, he did not possess either the moral or the intellectual elements out of which the answer could have sprung. As every bird has its own note, and every quadruped its bellow or its hinny, so every degree of human culture and unculture has its possible range of utterance. Hence, grand words denote a grand soul, and small souls are known by the pettiness of what they say. Measured by this rule, which is given us by nature, or rather by God, we are enabled to reject the calumnies of Renan, and place the Lord Jesus at the summit of man's spiritual life, where he is one with God. If any can be these are spiritual certainties, and they are such certainties as call forth in those to whom they have been disclosed, veneration, love, and trust toward Christ, second only to that which they feel toward the Heavenly Father. And thus they have in their own experience a key to language which scandalises mere reasoners and moralists, as when Christ claims that all shall honour the Son as they honour the Father, adding, "He who doth not honour the Son, doth not honour the Father who sent him" (25.)

And here we meet with that self-assertion on the part of Christ

which so displeases Renan, as to make him insinuate that Jesus was not without a touch of fanaticism. Undoubtedly Jesus does at this part of the Gospel take a far more lofty and personal tone than he observes previously. Here is the most marked instance of that gradual rise in deed, thought, and claim to which I have made reference, as characterising this marvellous Scripture. The argument having passed up several ascending stages, now takes its stand in the highest manifestation that God ever made of himself to man. The Son of God presents himself as truly God's agent and representative. This he offers as a simple fact. He utters his own mind, and that mind shows him to be morally one with God. But this position he occupies not with a view to his own aggrandisement, but rather as a proof of God's love to man in making him the Saviour of the world, and as an argument or appeal to the intelligence and sympathy of his auditors. A doctrine so lofty might easily be open to objection in the narrow, gross, and selfish souls by whom he was surrounded, who, accordingly, are represented as making characteristic objections, which continually call forth suitable explanations and answers from Jesus, all tending to illustrate and enforce the theme as of the sole Deity and supremacy of God, so of the supernal elevation of the Son in the moral and spiritual order.

Never before or since did a human being occupy so elevated a position, and never was a position occupied so filled with difficulty and peril. No small skill was required even to sustain the logical consistency and intellectual height of the position. The centre of the difficulty and the danger lay, however, in the moral element. These stilts, as ever, would only ensure exposure. Nothing but reality could bear Jesus up, and bear him through the drama. Yet he comes out of the conflict triumphantly. In consequence, he was what he professes to be. Therefore, bend your knee and bow your head in his sublime, yet touching and impressive presence.

These remarks, though called forth by the words of Christ, found in the sixth chapter, pertain to much that he utters afterwards. Once said, they need not be repeated.

x. *Jesus feeds five thousand* (vi., 1-15). The last recorded incident left Jesus in Jerusalem. The one we are about to notice places him near Julias, on the north-east corner of the Lake of Galilee. Yet the two stand in immediate sequence in the Gospel. How, then, can anyone pretend that that Scripture is or means to be a Memoir of our Lord? Moreover, it appears from verse the fourth that another Passover was approaching. Now, in v., 1, we find Jesus at a festival of the Jews in Jerusalem. The distance both of time and place is considerable. If the festival alluded to is the Feast of Tabernacles, the time is autumn. The Passover indicates spring. Thus the whole of winter is left without a single notice. Some five or six months produce not the slightest record. Clearly does such an omission declare that it is the principle of

selection, not that of transmissory deduction, of particulars that the author pursues.

The miracle has its roots in the Synoptical tradition or historical circle (Matt. xiv., '15). It is narrated with great simplicity. The Christ who acts here is the Christ we have become familiar with. Specially are we prepared, by his now ascertained moral and spiritual transcendence, for corresponding supremacy over external nature. Of that nature his Heavenly Father is the origin, and that nature subsists only in virtue of his divine presence and support. Little and much are both alike to God, for He who bestows all the forces of the universe can make little accomplish the work of much, and much fail of the work done by little. Moreover, the miracle is called forth by an exigency. The multitudes who follow Jesus across the lake cannot fail to lack food in the desert spot and the mountain cleft which Jesus has occupied for the purposes of solitary devotion. Is their zeal to be rewarded with starvation? The tender benevolence of Jesus answered, No! and he feeds them out of the inexhaustible stores of his Heavenly Father's fulness. In doing so, he owns the source whence the needful supplies proceed in an act of solemn thanksgiving to God, and at its termination utters one of those apophthegms of his which are as replete with every day prudence as is "Poor Richard's Almanac:" "Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing may be lost;" thus showing himself to be the minister of him who creates and sustains the universe, numbers the hairs of our head, and feeds the young ravens when they cry (Luke xii., 7, 24; Ps. cxlvii., 9).

The people who have been thus divinely fed, conclude:—"This certainly is the expected prophet." Thereupon they resolve to seize him that they may make him their king, for will not the Messiah speedily rid the soil of the Roman oppressor?

And surely, if Renan rightly interprets Christ, he will not forfeit so fine an opportunity. Nevertheless, he withdrew again into the recesses of the mountainous region at hand, that he might be by himself alone (15).

The argumentative appeal has, in this case, been only too prevailing. Jesus must moderate that heady ardour, otherwise he will become, what Renan says he was, namely, a political agitator.

xI. *Jesus walks on the sea to rescue his disciples* (vi., 16-21). When evening came the disciples went down to the shore and took their boat, with a view to pass to the western shore of the lake, whence they had come. Hardly have they left the land when the lake is tossed by one of those sudden and furious storms to which it has ever been liable. Jesus hastens to give them succour. Seeing him approach, walking on the sea, they are afraid; when they are relieved by that well-known and acceptable voice: "It is I, be not afraid!" He is received into the vessel, and the vessel is soon high and dry on the other side. Is this the tone of a legend? Did ever a legendist conceive and utter such a word

as "It is I, be not afraid?" could such a word have come from an impure heart, from a common-place man, from one who lent himself to popular prejudices, and fed the delusion that he wrought miracles?

The shores of England are ill-famed for their wrecks, and many a sailor has won a hero's wreath by saving imperilled persons from the deep. Is such heroism lessened when Jesus is the actor? and is any one of those brave hearts known to have taken the divine tone of "It is I, be not afraid?"

But the laws of gravity contradict the story. No, they don't, except to such persons as believe in a phantom God, which is no God at all. Everyone of those multitudinous drops which make up that now tranquil, now boisterous sheet of water, is held in the hollow of his hand, of whose spirit and power Jesus is the organ and the instrument. He of whom they hold their qualities is surely able to change them at his pleasure; or can man contrive to overcome or supersede the law of gravity when he wishes to ascend into the atmosphere, while God, whom you call omnipotent, is unable to compose the raging of a petty lake by any other means than by allowing it gradually to relapse into tranquillity? Jesus himself meets and puts back your objection, when he says, touching such Sadducean unbelief:—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. xii., 29).

Not only in this general principle, but in the particular incident now spoken of, does the fourth Gospel correspond with the Synoptics (Matt. xiv., 14; Mark vi., 35; Luke ix., 12). In particulars, the two authorities vary more or less; but who can expect a writer to agree with others who constantly selects what is most conducive to his argumentation?

I have, thus, step by step, followed the Evangelist as he unfolds his proof that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, for the twofold purpose of illustrating the general and all-important fact that God bears witness of himself in his Son Jesus, the Christ, and of exemplifying the principles I have laid down touching the origin, aim, and character of the fourth Gospel. Had I at my disposal, in this portion of my task, as many pages as I have paragraphs, I would continue in the same course until I came to the end of this admirable Scripture. The result, however, would be an increase of instances, not an augmentation of argumentative force. Circumscribed as I am in space, I shall, therefore, beg the reader to finish this imperfect deduction of evidence by going through the remaining chapters, only reserving to myself two great capital events, namely,

XII. *The resurrection of Lazarus, and the resurrection of Jesus.* On the former, little need be said. This, with Renan, is a lost cause. In his earlier editions he gave an elaborate explanation of what took place, which involved a collision on the part of Mary, Martha, and Jesus. In truth, Lazarus was not dead, but

the cause of Jesus being in a critical condition, the plan of a pretended death and a mock funeral was designed and carried into effect by the agents just named, in order to reanimate friends, confound enemies, and regain and restore success. This gross insult to Christ and Christendom called forth rebuke so severe from the public, and protests so decided from friends, that in his last edition its unscrupulous author cancels it of his own accord. Yet, lest his book should show a great gap, and his theory be exposed as broken down, he substitutes another supposition. Since, however, it is a supposition, and nothing else, it is of no more value than its predecessor, and may be left in high-minded silence to find its fate.

With a similar sentiment do I pass the impeachment of the character of Jesus which Renan has drawn up and endeavoured to establish, and that the rather, because to state the particulars would be to sully my pages, and in a measure to spread his venom. If the substance of what is here advanced is unquestionable, the character of Jesus needs no defence, being, as it is, its own evidence in being its own glory.

And thus we are brought face to face with the central fact of the New Testament—the resurrection of Jesus. The position which I take up respecting it, is that the resurrection of Jesus is so embedded in the account given of it in the fourth Gospel, as to present to minds and hearts in all ages, and of course in the present age, unquestionable claims to credence. In a similar manner the whole of Christian history affirms, presupposes, and demands the resurrection of Christ as an indispensable preliminary. These two points are illustrated in what follows.

I. NATURAL CIRCUMSTANCES ATTENDING THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS ATTEST ITS REALITY.

The resurrection of Jesus, considered as the basis on which the Church stands, includes a belief and a fact. The Apostles believed that Jesus was risen from the dead, and that belief had the fact of his having risen for its source and guarantee. The belief is admitted; the fact is denied. The denial, occasioned by the supernatural character of the resurrection, shuts out both the heathen view of the life beyond the tomb as well as the Jewish. As with Renan there is no personal immortality, death is the last act of this drama which we call life, and a hereafter, whether in the way of transition or resurrection, is utterly impossible. This denial of the supernatural is a tacit recognition of the natural. On that acknowledgment I plant my foot, and undertake to show that such natural circumstances attend the resurrection of Christ as attest and establish its reality. In what I am about to say I mainly follow the account given in the fourth Gospel. The resurrection of Jesus implies two facts:—he died on the cross; he was alive after death. These are its essentials as it is represented in

the New Testament (Rom. xiv., 9 ; 2 Cor. v., 15 ; Acts x., 40 seq. ; Apoc. i., 18). Admitting the death, Renan denies the living after death. What then of the belief ? It originated in a fancy hatched in the heated brain of an epileptic courtesan, and nursed and propagated by her associates, who had in reality removed the body by night.

Is this the interpretation you would gather from the account given in the New Testament ? or rather, does not that account exclude and confute it ? I have called it an interpretation, as if the Scripture had been the ground out of which the view was drawn. In truth, the Gospel knows nothing thereof. The account is a mere supposition. It is simply a fiction got up to explain certain undeniable facts. Instead of countenancing the theory, the author of the fourth Gospel writes in such a way as to explode it. Not only so, but his narrative contains features which make the resurrection of Christ a reality. Those features are natural circumstances that attend the event.

And now, first of all, peruse the entire narrative of what took place on that first Sunday of our era, extending from the first to the twenty-third verse of the twentieth chapter of the fourth Gospel. And in order to read it with pure eyes and an open heart, divest yourself, if needful, of all distaste for the supernatural, and suppose that the account concerns a dear and revered friend and benefactor of your own and of your family. Read the narrative, and tell me whether the whole is not simple, natural, touching, and every way such as in the circumstances you would be led to expect. Had you met with that narrative in any other book of any other age or nation, you would rise from reading it with a conviction of its representing a reality. And this general impression would be deepened and made permanent when you became acquainted with the circumstances of the case. What are they ?

It is Friday night, and Eastertide. A day of thick darkness and unutterable woe has this been for that band of attached, bereaved, and disappointed friends. They are the fellow-workers of Jesus in his great and benevolent undertaking. Chosen for the simplicity and soundness as well as the piety of their heart, they had consorted with him for many months, perhaps little short of three years, hearing his wise and gracious words, and witnessing his mighty and benignant deeds, meanwhile receiving from himself a holy and renewing influence, which, operating in their inmost nature, had acquired power and predominance such as to make its source an object to them of tenderest love and deepest reverence. Yet was there about him a mystery which they could not penetrate, and which kept them in a measure on the outside of his inner man. Filled and ruled by the falsities of the day, they, in at last acknowledging him for the expected Messiah, thought to find in him a temporal deliverer, who, employing his wondrous powers to expel the hated Roman from their sacred soil, would

restore the lost kingdom to the sons of Israel, and take his seat at their head, while they, under him, ruled over their unsparing oppressors, now their prostrate foes. Looking for a sceptre of iron, they had found a cross; looking for triumph and glory, they had found defeat and shame; looking for a living and ruling prince, they had found a dead and buried peasant. The bitter grief and terrible prostration that ensued was felt most keenly by a number of women, who, having clung around his person in Galilee, had followed his steps to Jerusalem, nor left him in his agony on the cross, when most of his male companions had forsaken him and fled. Among them was Mary, his own widowed and broken-hearted mother—most dejected, because most endeared and most affectionate. Next in blood, if not also in respectful love, was Mary (Salome), his mother's sister, married to Cleophas, and having for sons James the Less and Joses. Nearer, probably, than his aunt in tender and reverent regard was a third Mary, Mary of Magdala, a person of property and refinement, who owed to Jesus the harmony of an exquisite nature which had been disturbed, but which he had restored.

These women, faithful in life, prove faithful also in the hour of agony; and, when the death-cloud sinks on that mangled and tortured frame, stand there at the foot of the cross, their eyes, now dry from over-weeping, fixed with feverish ardour on him whom they so cherish and so bemoan. At length they withdraw into the city, with slow and tardy steps, being most unwilling, and utterly borne down by woe. The house toward which they make their way is, probably, that of another Mary, the mother of John Mark, who supplied the core of our second Gospel. This home was the ordinary *rendezvous* of the Jerusalem disciples (John xx., 10). There those grief-smitten women meet with the fugitive and despairing disciples. Not without delay do they obtain admission, for the house is closed against strangers, for fear of the Jews (John xx., 19).

Perfectly natural is that precaution. Yet is it a minute incident, and almost too much a matter of course to be mentioned. But, then, being mentioned as it is, it denotes the hand of an eye-witness. When we are describing a scene of actual life which we have witnessed, or in which we have taken a part, we unavoidably, in our wish to reproduce the same, put down all the incidents, whether small or large, mastered as we are by the impression produced on our mind by what we see around us. The incident, however, thus perpetuated has a tale to tell. It tells of danger without, and fear within. That fear had already driven the Apostles to seek a refuge under Mary's roof, and now betrays its presence and sway on every countenance. The very confidence in their coming triumph, now defeated, intensifies their fear. The fear, becoming morbid, exaggerates the danger, and makes

the dark overthrow more dark, until despondency sets in and becomes tyrannical, ending in total despair.

Such is the abject and murky condition of the Apostolic band when rejoined by those broken-hearted women. The scene that ensued I will not attempt to describe—its features are too painful.

The next day's dawn finds the occupants of that house, men and women, little better than corpses, so beaten down, so bruised in heart, so wearied in body, so exhausted in spirit are they each and all. When at length the bright and genial light of an Eastern sun began to requicken and revive the sufferers, fear would resume its empire, and, probably, cause every precaution to be doubled. However, it was a sacred day, and neither work nor movement was possible. And so another sun sank in thick darkness on the crouching and despairing disciples.

That mother, that aunt, and that female friend could not be wholly passive in the cruel emergency. They had but one thought. Their heart was in the tomb with Jesus. What could they do? True love in bereavement is ever asking to do something, and when it can do nothing else, it busies itself with tokens of affection and respect toward the departed.

Accordingly they will repair to the sepulchre. If they can do nothing else, they can place themselves near the already sacred spot where his body lies. They are up with the dawn, intent on their visit of tenderness. Mother and aunt, however, prove unequal to the undertaking. Their feet refuse their office, and they sink down overwhelmed in bitter grief. Less oppressive is the sorrow of Mary of Magdala, for she has not lost a son or a nephew, but a friend—a dear and venerated friend doubtless, one to whom she owes her mental soundness and her bodily vigour—still a friend and not a kinsman, and bereaved gratitude may stand erect under pressures which break the heart of mother and aunt. Yet it is still dark, and the occasion is mournful. Not alone shall she go. She is joined by two or three other women.

So far all is simple and natural. Would not the earliest opportunity be seized? The break of day would give immunity from interruption, and true tears never like to be seen. And if, after that long and feverish night anyone is to go, whose foot is sure to be on the threshold first? That of woman. Possibly Peter and John had been able to compose themselves to sleep, and knew nothing of the intention of "The three Mariess." But there was no composure for the women until they had been to the tomb.

When Mary Magdalen comes to the tomb she sees the aperture open, the stone being rolled back. Seized with amazement she hurries home.

How natural! how simple! Yet the narrative uses no exclamations, and I have to elicit her state of mind from the circumstances. And what does that state of mind imply? Clearly she had come

to the tomb expecting to find it closed. Instead, the mouth there in the side of the rock stands open, and as clearly the stone which closed it has been pushed along the groove back to the position in which it was before the cave had received the corpse. No less clear is it, even to her astonished eyes, that the door has been opened on the outside. No ordinary hand could have rolled back the stone, except from the outside. The stone was not thrown down, was not broken; but, as I have said, pushed or rolled along a groove, or rather two grooves, one at the top, the other at the bottom, cut for the purpose in the living rock. Accordingly, the body had been taken out and carried away. What it has taken me some time to make clear in word, Mary saw at one glance. Yes; the body of her friend has been removed. She is now distressed as well as amazed. And her distress equally with her amazement attests the reality of the scene.

In a moment her back is turned on the sepulchre, and she is on her way home.

Here is another stroke of nature. Whither else could she direct her steps? She must bear the astounding news; she must tell the woeful tale to the disciples. She and they must make diligent search. The precious body must be found and recovered.

In a few minutes (for love and grief have swift feet) she stands in the midst of the mournful band. But among them she does not discern those whom she specially wants. "Where," it is all she says—"Where are Peter and John?" Peter the chief disciple, and John the most beloved. They appear, and then she tells her sad tale:—

"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

Here, first, note the *we*, a diminutive token certainly, but all the more an indubitable one. Yes; there was a band of women, though but one (so to say) actor and one speaker; and that actor and speaker was, of all others, the most suitable for the occasion.

And, then, mark the report the actor and speaker makes. How emphatic, how full of emotion, and so how natural. And yet the removal of the body was but an inference. The speaker did not know the body had been removed. No; but the conclusion was inevitable, and the report in consequence was true to the speaker's thought. True, also, was it to the juncture—truer, far truer than some logically correct statement or question as to the cause and consequence of the removal of that stone. Thus, human beings speak when under strong emotion, they speak of facts.

And here a word or two on Renan's theory. The body had been removed by the disciples. Some one did it, but no one was answerable for it, though all turned the theft to account. If so, the whole conduct of the women was merely a piece of acting.

They either went forth to play a part in a preconcerted plot, or, coming into the plot afterwards, they helped on a deceit which others had practised.

The groundless accusation is nullified by the general tenour and every single feature of the narrative. Hardly, under the most favourable circumstances, could the fraudulent plot (had there been one) have escaped their womanly curiosity, and, had it done so, certainly it would have broken down in presence of their womanly honour. Imagine, if you can, the indignant reproof such a project would have called forth from at least the mother and the aunt. Terrible more even than crucifixion would the thought have been to them of such a dishonour to one whose life was so pure, whose aims were so elevated, whose death was so grand; such a dishonour, done not by his enemies, but by his friends; done with the connivance, if not the co-working, of a mother whose heart was still bleeding with the wound of that prophetic sword, the blade of which had proved so keen (Luke ii., 35).

Let us return to the sacred narrative. What is the effect of Mary's report? "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre." Was there ever great conciseness, yet fuller meaning?

And here a slight incident occurs which is equally characteristic and natural. "So they (we read) ran both together, and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre." First, why this record? Why did the writer note so apparently inconsiderable a circumstance? Because it was a simple fact, and because he, an eye-witness (John himself, probably), knew the fact; and, knowing, wrote it without reflecting whether it was considerable or not.

But is there reason for the difference of that speed? O, yes, Peter's was the speed of intellect, John's the speed of love, and the two never yet ran a race but love outstript intellect. Then there was a special cause of retardation on Peter's side. Only a few hours before he had denied, expressly denied, the Master whom he had sworn to serve. That denial now hung like a load of lead on his feet. A sense of shame, a burning sense of shame, kept him back from a scene where he might again meet that awful look which had sent him out of the court of law to weep bitterly, after the weakness of denying Jesus to a maid-servant.

First at the sepulchre, John was first to ascertain that Jesus was not there, and, from seeing the grave-clothes lying in order, to think that the body had not been violently and surreptitiously carried off, but, re-animated and glowing with life, had perhaps gone forth with calmness and deliberation.

By this time the slow-footed Peter reaches the spot. Receiving John's report, he, with his impulsive and heady nature, rushes in where the reverent feet of John had dared not tread. To him the

order and deliberation, which John had dimly discerned, become fully manifest. He comes out and states his impression to John. John, encouraged by Peter's example, enters the chamber of death, and, seeing its condition, believes that he whom they laid there on Friday evening had of himself gone forth alive.

How natural the whole. Specially must I draw attention to the care taken, according to their respective natures, by the two Apostles to ascertain the real facts of the case. Clearly they are actuated by no foregone conclusion. They do not hurry to a premature judgment. They act like men who doubt, and almost disbelieve. They will see with their own eyes, and yield belief only when, and as far as, it cannot be withheld. Nor, indeed, do they even appear to have had their honourable moral reluctance finally overcome, for in soberest terms does one of them, John, record :—"Then the disciples went away again unto their own home." The picture is not that of fanatical believers, but of men sunk in thought, hardly knowing what to make of the whole matter.

Meanwhile, Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping. Yes ; the two men had been too absorbed in their investigations to notice that disconsolate woman, who, probably, half ashamed of her tears, had hidden herself in some convenient nook close by. As they withdrew, she came forwards, still weeping, for the body she wanted to embalm had not been found. Might they not, however, have been deceived ? She herself will make research. Stooping timidly down she looks in at the opening, and sees divine messengers, who say to her :—"Woman, why weepest thou ?" She saith unto them :—"Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Poor afflicted creature ; her hope is gone, her fear is at the full, her heart is broken, and she weeps—she weeps tears of a grief which burns her heart. But then the soft balm of that divine sympathy, "Why weepest thou ?" comes like oil on the billows, and composing her spirit enables her to tell the reason of her woe.

And never did woe take a truer tongue :—"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. An enemy hath done this. The foe that slew him has carried him off, and left me without the barren satisfaction of paying respect to his pierced, wracked, and torn body. Where have they laid him ? I know not whither to turn ; I know not where to look for my dear Lord."

In that crisis she hears a noise behind her, and, turning back her head, sees a human form. A gush of hope ! It is the gardener ! He will know where I may find the body. "Sir," she stammers out, "if thou have born him hence, tell me where thou hast lain him, and I will take him away." It is not the gardener. It is Jesus himself.

Then there ensues a word or two, which for conciseness, simplicity, and impressiveness, is unparalleled. "Mary!" says Jesus. "Rabboni!" says Mary. The secret is out. Two words tell it, and tell it unmistakably. What! did she not know his voice, and did he not know her voice? Often had his "Mary!" brought forth her "Rabboni!" but never with such thrilling effect as now. O, how must her poor fond heart have quivered under his "Mary," and how did his manly and exulting heart rejoice over his loving disciple—to open her eyes, and show her himself, and so educe from her the glad recognition, "Rabboni!"

Has some such instance never occurred to the reader? Your sick daughter lies, mother, in a couch by your bedside. She awakes in the thick darkness of night, and, burning with fever, tosses about for a time, and then moans out—"Mother!" Sunk in sleep, made very deep by over-watching, you hear not the word. Again it is uttered. You become uneasy, and, turning in your bed, are suddenly startled by the piercing accent—"Mother," and, alarmed and distressed, answer without thought, "Ada!" Ada hears the well-known voice, and is composed. The child has found its parent, the parent has soothed her child. A sweet assurance that the one is near the other calms both, and in a few minutes they are again asleep.

The morrow comes. The mother knows her child called her, and the child knows her mother soothed her. The knowledge on both sides is exact, full, and without misgiving.

Similar was Mary's knowledge of the presence of Jesus. Yes it is he; only his, that sweet, liquid, and penetrating tone; only his, that "Mary!"

Knowing it is he, she rushes to seize what she so longed to possess. Her eagerness receives a check. Jesus is not what she takes him for. Not a body to be reclaimed, but a spirit to ascend to the bosom of God is before her; and, therefore, he says:—"Touch me not, but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

The revelation is now complete. Yes; very well did she recognise that voice; very well did she recognise that practical spirit which she had so long seen thoughtful and busy for others; very well did she recognise that sublime disclosure so often and in so many ways made in her hearing, how that God the Father of Jesus is the Father of all, and how that in consequence all his disciples are his brethren, and as his brethren, brethren the one to the other. The whole revelation flashed at once on her mind, and she knew and felt in her inmost soul that Jesus was before her, and that she stood in that beloved and venerated presence.

A moment this of ecstasy, if ever ecstasy was felt by woman or man; a moment of thrilling delight!

Yet mark the sobriety of the narrative :—" Mary Magdalen came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her." The sobriety is at first almost incomprehensible. Certainly, there is here no excitement, no "hallucination." The sobriety of the narrative betokens a similar sobriety on Mary's part. And is it natural she should be thus self-possessed and calm? Yes; quite natural. It is only slight and superficial circumstances that stir and toss our mysterious nature. Grand events produce corresponding grandeur in the soul, and whatever is grand is also tranquil.

One more episode completes this marvellous cycle of facts. When Mary Magdalen made her first report to the assembled disciples, she encountered blank disbelief. "Her words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Luke xxiv., 11). Credulity, says the accuser, was the parent of the resurrection. The Apostolic band in the hour of their deepest dejection and distress were not credulous, but incredulous. And well they might be incredulous. Did they not think they had been in some way befooled? For had they not left all to follow Christ? With what result? Bitter disappointment. O, no; they were not to be misled a second time. Jesus risen? Jesus alive? A tale too idle to delude them.

A more hopeless state of mind in regard to faith cannot be imagined. The men are sceptics; nay, not sceptics so much as positive unbelievers, and they are unbelievers of the extremest kind, for there they are with their eyes now wide open to the Will-o'-the-wisp vagaries by which they were seduced.

Yet, that Sunday of incredulity does not end without leaving them sincere believers in the risen Christ. How was so great and sudden a change produced? It was produced by the clear and emphatic testimony of Peter, John, and Mary, supported, doubtless, by the testimony of the other women.

The early part of the day appears to have been spent in listening to the accounts those fellow-disciples had to give. The evening brought the crowning evidence. Jesus stands in their midst. He comes, as he had ever come, with a friendly salutation on his lips. When they heard his "Peace be with you," their conversion was completed. Moreover, he shows them his hands and his side—those hands pierced with the nails, and that side pierced with the spear.

Their incredulity is gone. Seeing and recognising Jesus, they believe and know that he is alive, and about to enter into the inner mansion of his Father and their Father, his God and their God.

Here again ecstasy, and here again sobriety, for the Scripture simply states: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" (John xx., 20).

That gladness, however, if calm, was deep and rich; such

gladness as no experience of ours can adequately reproduce or represent.

Not in all history is there a cycle of events so simple, so natural, so sublime, so impressive, and so momentous as that through which we have now gone. The measure of its grandeur is the index of its moral and spiritual significance. Thus grand is the Gospel, and thus grand is the basis on which the Gospel rests ; only that the grandeur of the Gospel must be measured by its issues in eternity. Here once more we have an instance of the way in which God bears witness of himself in the fourth Gospel, and in its principal personage, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. NATURAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOLLOWING THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS ATTEST ITS REALITY.

Christianity is under our eyes on whichever side we turn. Here undoubtedly it is. With equal certainty may I pronounce it a great power. It would, indeed, be more correct to say that it is the greatest power on earth. Beyond a question it is the vital principle of the civilisation of the age, and the religion of the most cultivated nations and individuals on the face of the earth. Externally this vast power presents signs of decomposition. But the changes that are proceeding are only on the surface. The frost and ice of winter are dissolving, but only in preparation for another spring. Christianity has gone through similar changes. Of these the Lutheran Reformation was the last. Then superficial observers foretold ruin. Whereas nothing worse than liberty came, and with liberty, its natural consequence, moral, spiritual, and intellectual power ; and that, too, so deep, so genuine, so great as to make the last three centuries the most flourishing period in all history. The same central forces, which, worked by the voice of a miner's son, then threw off the chains of Ecclesiastical authority, are now, as a natural result, throwing off the chains of Ecclesiastical creeds, and the same perennial vitality that has put forth the rich harvest of culture which salute our eyes and delight our hearts now, will put forth for our sons and our sons' sons richer and ever richer harvests of culture, to salute the eyes and delight the hearts of coming generations in long succession. Human society, under the influence of the Gospel, is filled and actuated by nothing less than the Spirit of the ever-living God ; and, consequently, presents upon a finite theatre the ever fuller and brighter manifestations of the Infinite Father, who is the Father of Jesus and the Father of the human race.

Whence the present summertide of individual and social greatness and beauty ? It has not of a sudden fallen from heaven, after the fashion of the fabled shield of Mars. It is traceable back in successive waves, like the flowings of the Gulf Stream, from the point where we stand, through eighteen centuries, to the

age of the earliest Cæsars. With the aid of what is called Profane History we can follow the mighty stream back to its source in the petty mound, outside the walls of Jerusalem, on which stood the cross on which Jesus suffered and died.

Jerusalem, the cross, Jesus, death—they are every one of them a centre of social weakness. Whence, then, the power? "Jerusalem," a city despised and hated, perished from top to bottom in the year A.D. 70, under the battering-rams of Vespasian, Emperor of Rome. "The cross," an instrument of torture for the refuse of the earth, was at the time a token of contempt and ignominy. "Jesus"—the etymology of the name denotes a Jew—one of a race that during these eighteen centuries has been despised and down-trodden all over the civilised globe. "Died!" If Jesus, the author of Christianity died, how was it that his religion did not die with him? He had, you say, twelve disciples, and they established his religion. Who were they? Jewish peasants. How did they emerge from their native obscurity? How did they recover courage after their leader's crucifixion? And why, on their re-appearance in public, were they not put down by the same Jewish and Roman authority which had crucified Christ? The cause they espoused was in substance the same as that which had united Jewish bigotry and Roman jealousy in one mass of overwhelming force. And if by some unknown and incredible chance they escaped the fury of the High Priest and the police of the Procurator, what means did they possess for a great religious and social revolution? Perhaps among the twelve there was at least one of great and commanding genius? They were all men as ordinary in intellect as they were low in position, and destitute of social resources. Whence, then, the change?

The change was effected by a belief in the resurrection of Jesus. And whence that belief? A crazy woman, Renan declares, fancied she saw Jesus after his death, and this fancy, adopted by the Apostles, founded the Church.

Surely a more unnatural, a more unlikely theory was never put forwards. Causes, to be real and true, must bear some resemblance and proportion to their alleged effects. Are these the qualities you recognise between our present culture and that hair-brained fancy? Christian civilisation has its origin in an empty tomb, and in the morning dream of a visionary and epileptic woman. The statement of the hypothesis (for hypothesis it is, and nothing more) is its confutation. As if a cause thus supported had the slightest chance of success under the rule of Caiaphas, the high priest, and Pontius Pilate, the governor. Already they had had to deal with religious enthusiasts, and proved themselves no less able than willing to put them down. Indeed, the political and the religious condition of the land was far too feverish to tolerate for a moment a cause which certainly meant to undermine Judaism, and seemed to threaten Cæsarism as well.

What, then, is the alternative? I know of none, but the resurrection of Christ. Here and here only have you a cause—an adequate cause. Moreover, this cause in its character corresponds with the known effects. At this very hour you can trace the resemblance and the proportion between the known effects and the alleged cause. The same comparison can be made at any date in the past, not excepting the days that immediately followed the crucifixion. Very certain is it that the only historical account we possess of the whole matter ascribes, in the clearest and most emphatic terms—ascribes the establishment of Christianity to the resurrection of its originator.

And now observe, in a concise outline, how simple and natural the historical narration is.

The resurrection of Jesus revives his prostrate cause. From Easter to Whitsunide his rallied disciples, to whom alone his person is familiar, have occasional communion with him. During the interval he is seen by a number of them, which amounts to more than five hundred. Such is the testimony of Paul, who, from a raging persecutor, is made into a devoted Apostle by seeing the risen and glorified Jesus. This testimony he bears in face of a hostile world five or six years after the alleged resurrection takes place. At the close of the interval, that is, about six weeks after Christ's death, the Apostles come together in Jerusalem. What, now, is their condition! No longer are they in despair. Rather, they are not less bold than calm and determined. Their first thought and act is to prepare for work, by filling up the vacancy in the body occasioned by the death of Judas. Having done this, and having received an extraordinary effusion of the Spirit of God, they go forth into the streets and the Temple of Jerusalem, and proclaim the resurrection of Jesus. Of this they offer themselves as sponsors. Of course, they call forth opposition. By every means at the disposal of unscrupulous bigots they are withstood. Some of them are thrown into prison. One of their converts is stoned to death. With these penalties before their eyes, they are commanded by the rulers to hold their peace, and they answer, addressing the supreme court of the land:—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts iv., 19, 20).

Had Christianity bequeathed to the world no other word than that, it would have earned the everlasting gratitude of mankind. Mark its unquestionable sincerity; its heroic elevation; its manly self-respect; its simple recognition of God as the source and the support of truth; its defiance of sacerdotal authority; its thorough trust in the goodness of the cause, and its noble resolution to venture all on the issue. Dwell in thought on these qualities—qualities which are inherent in the answer, and which attest the reality as well as the nobleness of the answer—and then say

whether an utterance thus natural, thus simple, thus sublime, could have been generated by the foul and vitiated atmosphere of a set of fanatics, dishonest, probably, but certainly deluded and collusive. Dwell in thought on these qualities, and then say, have we in Renan's theory an adequate cause of the revival and success of the enterprise of Christ, and such a commencement of Christian history as makes that history at all possible. If not, then no alternative remains but to accept their testimony, and believe that he who died on the cross lives again, and lives for evermore.

I say for evermore, for the very qualities which certify the genuineness of the words of Peter and John have accompanied the spread of Christianity from the moment when they were uttered down to this hour. Christ lives in his Church, and, consequently, his Church attests his presence by ever manifesting his spirit. The moral heroism of Peter and John continues still in our midst, and makes the religion of Jesus the sanctifying, elevating, and ennobling principle of the world.

Having stated the fact, I go back to the earliest days of the Church. And what do I see there? Unquestionable traces of a new and grand vitalising moral power. That power is new—you find it nowhere in the ancient world before. It is a power grand in its vitalising efficacy. It revived the lost cause of Christ. It has no explanation but in his resurrection as recorded in the New Testament. Of the import of that record—of its explicitness, its fulness, its emphasis, the variety of its sources, and the diversity of its forms there is no question. The substance of the record is the one theme of the New Testament. Either the record is true, or the New Testament is false. There never was a clearer alternative.

But I now propose to go beyond the covers of the Bible, and to show the same record in other writings—writings unquestionably authentic, and confined within the century that elapsed after the crucifixion.

The first link in the chain connects my testimony with the evidence of the Apostle Paul. I refer to one whom he styles his "fellow-labourer." His name is Clement (already referred to). He wrote an Epistle which has come down into our hands. It is entitled, "The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians." The writer is believed to have been a member of the Church of Rome. Certainly his letter opens thus :—

"The Church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ : Grace unto you, and peace from Almighty God, through Jesus Christ, be multiplied."

The entire composition breathes the simple, pure, and high-toned morality of the New Testament, as well as testifies to its source in the resurrection of Christ, the necessary antecedent of

the outpouring of the Spirit of God—the source of all Christian moral light and power :—

“Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord continually proves to us that there shall be a future resurrection, of which he has rendered the Lord Jesus Christ the first fruits, by raising him from the dead. Having then this hope, let our souls be bound to him who is faithful to his promises and just in his judgments. Let us draw near to him with holiness of spirit, lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto him, loving our gracious and merciful Father, who has made us partakers in the blessings of his chosen ones. Let our whole body be preserved in Christ Jesus ; let every one be subject to his neighbour, according to the special gift bestowed upon him. Let the strong not despise the weak, and let the weak show respect to the strong. Let the rich man provide for the wants of the poor ; and let the poor man bless God, because He hath given him one by whom his need may be supplied. Let the wise man show his wisdom, not by words, but through good deeds. Let the humble not bear testimony to himself, but leave witness to be borne to him by another. The Apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ from God; Christ, therefore, was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ. Having, therefore, received their instructions, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the Word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities they appointed the first fruits of their labours, having first proved them by the Spirit, to be overseers and servants of those who should afterwards believe. Let him who has love to Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the bond of the love of God? Love uniteth us to God. Love covereth a multitude of sins. Love beareth all things. There is nothing low, nothing arrogant in love. Love doeth all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord made us his own. On account of the love he bore us Jesus Christ, our Lord, gave his blood for us, by the will of God. May God, who seeth all things, and who is the ruler of all spirits, and the Lord of all flesh—who chose our Lord Jesus Christ, and us through him, to be a peculiar people—grant to every soul that calleth upon his glorious and holy name, faith, reverence, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of his name, through our High Priest and protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to him glory, and majesty, and power, and honour, both now and evermore. Amen.”

The next testimony is taken from “The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians :”—

“I have greatly rejoiced with you in our Lord Jesus Christ, because ye have followed the example of true love, as manifested by God, and have accompanied, as became you, those who were bound in chains, the fitting ornaments of saints, the diadems of the true elect of God and our Lord; and because the strong root of your faith, spoken in past days, endureth until now, and bringeth forth fruit to our Lord Jesus Christ, who, for our sins suffered even unto death, but whom God raised from the dead, having loosed the bands of the grave; in whom, though now ye see him not, ye believe, and believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, into which joy many desire to enter, knowing that by grace you are saved, not of works, but by the will of God, through Jesus Christ.”

The third testimony is taken from “The Epistle to Diognetus :”—

“Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor customs. The course of conduct which they follow has not

been devised by any speculation of inquisitive men. But inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing and food, they pursue their wonderful and striking method of life. They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry as do all; they beget children, but do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are poor, but make many rich. They lack all things, and yet abound in all. They are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified. They are reviled, and bless. They are insulted, and repay the insult with honour. They do good, and yet are punished as evil-doers; when punished they rejoice as if quickened into life. They are assailed by the Jews as foreigners, and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred. To sum up all in one word—what the soul is in the body that are Christians in the world. For truly God sent Christ as a Saviour, seeking to persuade, not to compel us, for violence has no place in the character of God, and He will send him to judge us. Do you not see his disciples exposed to wild beasts that they may be made to deny the Lord, and yet not overcome? Do you not see that the more of them that are punished, the greater becomes the number of the rest? This does not seem the work of man; it is the power of God. These are the evidences of the manifestation of Christ. If you possess this faith you likewise shall receive knowledge of the Father. For God loves mankind, whom He formed after his own image, and to whom He has promised a kingdom in heaven, and will give it to all who love him. And when you have obtained this knowledge, with what joy will you be filled. How will you love him who first loved you. And do not wonder that a man may become an imitator of God. He can, if he is willing. He who taketh upon himself his neighbour's burden; he, who, being superior, benefits his inferior, and distributeth to the needy the abundance he has received of God, becometh a god to those to whom he ministers, and so is an imitator of God."

My last citation is from the First Apology of Justin, the martyr, presented early in the second century to Titus Antoninus, the reigning Emperor, and to the Senate of Rome:—

"We come not to flatter you, but to beg you to pass judgment on us after a close and searching investigation. Our accusers may kill, they cannot harm us. We are condemned for a name, as if to be Christians were in itself condemnable. When charged with being Christians, we have the option to deny the charge, but we would not live by telling a lie, for we desire to live with God, not now only, but hereafter, and God is truth and hateth falsehood. We are pledged to do no wickedness, and yet are charged with being atheists. We confess we are atheists so far as the gods of tradition are confessed. Else we worship the true God, the author of righteousness, and temperance, and the other virtues, who himself is free from all impurity, and accepts those who imitate his own excellencies. And more than all men we are your helpers, for we teach that God, seeing all things, seeth even the human heart, and punisheth what is bad, but rewardeth what is good. Our teacher of these things is Jesus Christ, who was born for this purpose. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, and raised from the dead by God the Father of all, in the times of Tiberius Cæsar. Brief and concise utterances fell from him, for he was no sophist, but his word was the power of God. Among his sayings is this:—'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things

that are God's.' Whence we worship God, but in other things we gladly serve you. Since our leader was crucified, his great symbol with us is the cross. We receive our members by baptism of water, to show that the convert hath made a willing choice of Christ, and bindeth himself to live a pure and useful life. The rite is called illumination, because the person baptised is taught to renounce sin, to seek forgiveness, and to dedicate himself to God, rising out of the death of sin into the true and everlasting life, and so being born again. This is the manner of our service : As many as are persuaded and believe that what we say is true, and undertake to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and entreat God with fasting for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same way in which we ourselves were regenerated. For in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit they receive the washing with water. They are then brought to the place where those are assembled who are called brethren, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and the baptised persons, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the President of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he, taking them, giveth praise and glory to the Father of the universe in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying, Amen. Then those who are called deacons give to each to partake of the bread and wine; and to those who are absent they carry away a portion. And this food is called among us Eucharist (thanksgiving). And we afterwards continually remind each other of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we stand the one by the other; and for all things wherewith we are supplied we bless the Maker of all, through his Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit. And on the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together in one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles, or the writings of the Prophets, are read. Then the President speaketh to the assembly, instructing and exhorting all to imitate these beautiful things. Then we all rise and pray. And they who are well-to-do and willing give what each thinketh fit, and what is collected is deposited with the President, who succoureth the orphans and widows, and those who through sickness, or any other cause, are in want; and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning amongst us; and, in a word, taketh care of all who are in need. Now, Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the day on which Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead. For he was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (*Saturday*), and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the sun, he appeared to his Apostles and disciples, having taught them these things which we have submitted to you also for your consideration. And if these things seem to you reasonable and true, honour them; but if they seem empty of sense, despise them; and do not decree death against those who have done no wrong, as you would against your enemies."

Put now together these four testimonies :—1, That of the letter of Clement to the Corinthians; 2, That of the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians; 3, That of the letter to Diognetus; and 4, That of the defence of Christianity presented to the Emperor of Rome by Justin, who had been a philosopher, is now a Christian teacher, and will end his days by adding to his name the title of martyr.

FINAL SUMMARY.

The period covered by these joint testimonies is about sixty years. It begins by showing you Christianity as it was in the last days of Paul's life, and it ends by placing under your eyes Christianity as it emerges into the full light of day, and stands before the eyes of the rulers of the world. Substantially, you see it is the same as you find in the books of the New Testament. And what is that? It is a religion revealed of God through Christ, and attested by God's Spirit in providence, involving the raising of Christ from the dead, and the seating of him at the right hand of power in the invisible world, and the rapid diffusion of his influence and dominion over the earth, that influence and that dominion being God's sovereignty in conscience, and God's agency in purifying, enriching, and ennobling human lives, so as to make them great here and eternally blessed hereafter. This is the Christianity of the New Testament. This is the "glad tidings of great joy" which Jesus was commissioned and enabled to proclaim to the world; and this is the religion that was accepted as the religion of Jesus down to the commencement of the second century. Its several particulars I need not recapitulate, but two things I must lay my finger on. The first is the central fact that Jesus lived after his death, and continued, through the Spirit of God, to pour down gifts for men. The second is that this fact is, as a fact, attested by the entire Church of the earliest and best days in connection with a system of religion whose aim was a pure and single heart, and a godlike life. That aim was reached by the first confessors of the Gospel, who, in consequence, remain to all posterity credible witnesses of the truth which they themselves had embraced, which they published with all the simplicity, diligence, and ability they could command, and which they upheld and confirmed with the loss of character, position, substance, liberty, and, in many cases, life itself,—like the great Apostle, counting "nothing dear, unto themselves so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx., 24). Here is the key-note of the divine anthem of praise to the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, which has been sung age after age from the first, and will still go pealing on, only with more variety of tone and movement, and ampler volume of harmony, until God's kingdom is fully come, and God's will fully done on earth, so as to prepare the worshippers below for the diviner worship above, where they will "sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb," God's two chief instruments for reconciling the world unto himself (Rev. xv., 3 seq.).

Thus does God bear witness of himself and of his Son in the

resurrection of the latter from the dead, and thus does He complete and crown the long and varied line of witnesses which He has, from the earliest ages, given of himself in every successive generation, and in all the sages of antiquity, nor least in the Biblical seers—the types and forerunners of Christ, “the bright and morning Star” of a new and higher order of civilisation, and the eventual Life, Light, and Saviour of the whole human race.

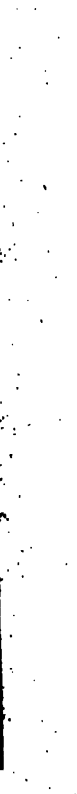
THE EVANGIL.

O Gott ! wir dich nicht kannten,
So dunkel war es hier,
Als du den Sohn uns sandtest
Mit licht und kraft von dir.
Im himmel sei dir ehre,
Auf erden preis und ruhm,
Für die Versöhnungslehre,
Fürs Evangelium.

Wohl dem, der willig höret
Des lebens wort, und gern
Den Weg sich lasset führen
Zum himmel auf, zum Herrn.
Dann wird er sehn und schmecken
Wie lieblich er und gut.
Wie herrlich er will lohnen
Dem echten liebesmuth.

Frederike Bremer.





1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".







